■ Entertainment
Carrie's single tops 4 Billboard charts

■ Business
Entrepreneurial ideas from twentysomethings

■ Sports
Unheralded Crapitas buries Serena in Wimbledon 'graveyard'

■ Lifestyle/C2
Explosion of young talents in the performing arts

■ Opinion/A15
New columnist Fr. Joaquin G. Bernas writes about the tapes

Int'l groups say RP media killings far from solved

By Mike Doon

TWO INTERNATIONAL groups yesterday said that the murders of Filipino journalists were far from solved, contrary to the government's claims.

"It's a long difficult road and not enough has been done, in my opinion," Ric Wright,

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

'It's Not My Voice Movement' urged

By DJ Yap
and Fe Zamora

Monday, June 27, 2005 ■ 36 pages | vol. 29 | no. 199
website: www.inq7.net

LAST RESPECTS. People wait in line for a glimpse of the late former Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin's remains before he is buried tomorrow.

Snap election perfectly legal move–Roco

Bunye says proposal is absurd

By Michael Lim Ubac

ALTHOUGH Malacañang has called it "absurd," a proposal for a "snap election" appeared to be gaining ground with former Sen. Raul Roco describing it as a perfectly legal move to prevent the nation from careening toward a cliff.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said he's looking at an immediate vote was a "workable and acceptable alternative" in the event President Macapagal-Arroyo resigns or is ordered from office as a consequence of an illegal gambling scandal that allegedly involves her family and a wiretap controversy that purportedly drains the demand in the next election.

Rep. Justice Reyes of Negros Occidental said Ric Aseyo would seek a "fresh mandate," but Rep. Raul Roco Gloriano of Taguig said a vote now could only take place if Vice President Noli de Castro resigns.

Calls for snap election or resignation of the President are absurd," said Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye. "All those who want to run for president will have to wait for the next presidential election" in 2010.

Bunye, yesterday, Malacañang warned against opposition calls and its pay dates to form Mr. to urge or speak up on the tapped telephone conversation that implicated the had pressured Chairman Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano for a one-million-vote victory.

"I don't see how you can draw a comparison between not paying dues and the President holding her silence, at least for the time being," said Gabriel Claudio, the President's adviser on political affairs.

"Not paying dues is simply against the law," he said. "Politics is one thing, economic sabotage and blackmail is another."

Claudio also dismissed as "dirty tricks at their dirtiest" text messages being circulated, saying that the administration was paying up to P1 million to each congressman who would vote to stop the House inquiry into the wiretap.

"There are no lobby money, no distribution or pressure being used by the administration or members of Congress, and certainly no one of Negros, President Social Fund or any government funds for this purpose will ever be considered or allowed," Claudio said.

In an interview yesterday Roco censored the claim by some quarters that a snap election was unconstitutional, saying it would be legal since both the Arroyo and De Castro resigned.

Roco compared De Castro to the spectator of a car being driven by Ms Arroyo which, he said, unfortunately had gone out of control and was now heading straight toward a cliff.

"But it is not the fault (of the country's sake), resign now," said Roco.

Roco brushed aside suggestions that there was no visible alternative to Ms Arroyo and that this was why the opposition had so far failed to drum up popular support for protest actions.

FOR COLLECTION 44

Party-list group snubs summit

By Michael Lim Ubac

POLITICAL parties are scheduled to meet today to lay the groundwork for the July 11 political summit called by Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr., but a party-list group is snubbing the event.

"It is not prudent to schedule ORM, [President Macapagal-Arroyo] forces in the wake of the tapping controversy and the jueteng scandal," Amalayuma party-list Rep. Rafael Mariano said.

He told the Inquirer that fellow Anakpawis Rep. Crispin Beltran and other party-list groups in the House of Representatives were not keen on joining the event to be held at a building near the Batasang Pambansa complex in Quezon City.

The country's major political parties had adopted a summit agenda that included seven topics—government spending and governance; human capital development; land use; natural resources development and environment; tourism; jobs and wealth generation; food security; peace process with Moro and communist rebels; and fiscal and financial resources management.

De Venecia said last month that consultations on issues, such as the shift to a parliamentary form of government and federal type of government, would be discussed at the summit after the Senate and House committees on constitutional

READ STORY, A10

Rosales to become RP's new prince of Church, says Cruz

By Luige A. del Puerto
and Christian V. Esguerra

MANILA Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales will soon likely be the country's newest prince of the Church.

"I'm 120 percent sure about that," Archbishop Oscar Cruz of Lingayen-Dagupan told reporters yesterday.

Fr. Rufino Sescon, the priests secretary of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin, said "it's just a matter of time" before the Vatican [would] make Rosales a cardinal. Rosales succeeded Sin as head of the Archdiocese of Manila.

Both Cruz and Sescon explained that by protocol, whenever headed the powerful and influential See of Manila who earned a cardinal or [a] hat of the Church.

"That's automatic," Sescon told reporters yesterday. "[It's] no culture."

Cruz said [the] would also be the case for Archbishop Antonio Ledesma, Archbishop Ricardo Cardinal Vidal, 74, and the Holy See usually names Filipino archbishops only for the Archdiocese of Manila and Cebu.

Friendship Day revives RP-Spain historical ties

By Aristotle Dorotita

A WEARY nation submerges in amnesia this week from the political turmoil to Imperial Manila on its glorious past as it commemorates the first Spanish-Filipino Friendship Day in Iloilo City, the last capital of the Spanish Empire in Asia, which first Spanish Governor General Diego de los Rios materialized in the Filipino Revolutionary

ANALYSIS

STORY on Dec. 22, 2000.

The commemoration, aimed at reviving the waning historical relations between the Philippines and Spain, will reach its climax on June 30 with ceremonies at Iloilo's Plaza Libertad. It will be graced by President Macapagal-Arroyo and other notables from Manila, including Sen. Edgardo Angara, author of the Spanish-Filipino Friendship Day legislation, Senate President Franklin Drilon and Spanish Ambassador Ignacio Sagar.

June 30 was designated as friendship day because it was on that day that President

Traders beat museum execs to galleon treasure

By Gil Francis G. Arevalo
PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

LUCBAN CITY—Museum officials here found out too late that fishermen on Tapia Rapa Island had discovered late last year a sunken Spanish galleon that contained gold and silver coins, jars and other valuable treasures.

More than a thousand 17th- and 18th-century Spanish coins were recovered from the wreckage but only fewer than 20 pieces could be left because the fishermen had quietly sold the items to treasure hunters and collectors, Legazpi Museum curator Erlinda Bellera said, citing a report by two residents of Barangay Viga in Tapia Rapa.

Tapia Rapa is about two hours by motorboat from Alcoy's Bonanza, if would take another one and a half hours overland to Viga.

The hunters was an Irish and profitable Chri Sabastian Rock in Barangay Viga and neighboring villages temporarily stopped fishing.

Taiwanese, Japanese, Korean and Filipino businessmen and collectors coming from Manila had frequented the village to buy as many coins and other items as possible, the town's officials learned. The price of each coin ranged from P6,000 to P10,000.

TREASURES, A7

THESE centuries-old Spanish gold and silver coins were among the treasures found in the sunken galleon off Tapia Rapa Island in Aloay.

A2
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2005

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Isolated showers and thunderstorms (possibly strong) today and tomorrow. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated thunderstorms. No gale warning is hoisted over any part of the country.

Source: PAGASA

Second FRONTPAGE

Main Week	Standard/Main	Entertainment	Sports
Metro	Standard/Main	Business	Sports
Nation/Int'l	Standard/Main	Obits	Cloudy with Sun
Luzon	Standard/Main	Opinion	Cloudy with Sun
Visayas	Standard/Main	Classified	Cloudy with Sun
Mindanao	Standard/Main	Lifestyle	Cloudy with Sun
Legacy	Standard/Main	Lifestyle/Arts & Ent	Cloudy with Sun
Calendar	Main	Comics	Cloudy with Sun

VAT guidelines out today

By Michelle V. Remo

THE GOVERNMENT will issue today the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the recently-passed expanded value-added tax law that economists a provincians suspending the proposed limit on input VAT credits after businessmen complained about the cap.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima will sign the VAT law's IRR which will take effect 15 days after publication in a newspaper.

The Expanded Value-Added Tax Act of 2005, which basically expands the coverage of the tax to include more services, such as the oil industry, contains a provision limiting the input VAT credits that businesses can claim.

But business groups objected to the VAT cap, saying it would further increase their cost of doing business in the Philippines, where prices of commodities like oil and electricity, which are common inputs for business, are already high.

They warned that they might be forced to raise the prices of their products in compensation for the additional business cost resulting from the VAT cap.

Due to the strong clamor against the cap, Finance and internal revenue officials crafted the IRR in such a way that would temporarily make it possible for businesses to still claim their input VAT credits in full, despite a provision in the VAT law requiring the capping of the credits.

What credits are

Input VAT credits are the amount of VAT paid by a firm upon purchases of any goods (like raw materials) or services, which may include the 10-percent VAT. The input VAT credits are deducted from the firm's gross VAT liability (called the output VAT).

With the VAT cap, therefore, the amount of input VAT credits that firms can claim will be limited. The law specifically sets the cap on input VAT credits at 70 percent of a firm's output VAT. This means that if the firm has P100,000 worth of output VAT for a month, it can only deduct input VAT worth P70,000 or below, even though it actually has a higher amount of input VAT, say P90,000.

Only in December

Bureau of Internal Revenue Deputy Commissioner Kim Henares said that under the IRR, businesses would be allowed to use 100 percent of their input VAT credits in their monthly VAT transactions from July to November. It is only in December that businesses would be asked to pay their additional VAT liability resulting from the VAT cap, she said.

But while the IRR calls for the collection of the additional VAT liability by December, its real intention is to buy time for authorities to amend the VAT law.

Finance Undersecretary Emmanuel Buenaventura earlier said the DOF was pushing for a law that would raise the threshold of the VAT cap to 90 percent, instead of 70 percent, to make the cap less of a burden to businesses.

While businesses seemed to totally scrap the VAT cap, Buenaventura said the DOF was only looking at increasing the threshold to somehow protect the government's revenue collection.

The idea of putting a cap on input VAT credits was first raised amid the huge deficiencies in the government's VAT collections.

Impact higher than output

The DOF had said that quite a number of firms, including those in the telecommunications industry, tend to have input VAT claims that were larger than their output VAT, resulting in the government having to give them refunds.

Thus, DOF wanted to have the bill amending the VAT law enrolled as urgent. They wanted to persuade businessmen in some prime just because of the VAT cap," Henares said in an interview.

Moves to have the new VAT law amended early came after its passage last month. Serious deliberations on the VAT bill took several months in Congress.

GMA to sign EO cutting oil, LPG tariffs

By Christine O. Avendaño

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo will soon sign an executive order reducing tariffs on petroleum and other refined products as well as liquefied petroleum gas to cushion the impact of surging oil prices in the world market and the impending implementation of the new value-added tax (VAT) law.

Trade Secretary Ignacio Bunye said yesterday the President will issue the EO following the approval by the National Economic Development Authority of the tariff proposal contained by the Committee on Tariff and Related Matters.

Under the proposal, the tariffs on crude and refined products will be reduced from 3 percent to 1 percent and on LPG from 5 percent to zero.

On top of the tariff cuts, Bunye said the energy department will also reduce the excise tax on diesel, kerosene and bunker oil and reduce the excise tax on regular gasoline as provided for in the new VAT law.

"Based on their forecasts, the impact on the following products will be less than 10 percent," Bunye said in his weekly column, "News from the Palace."

For unleaded gasoline, it would be 6.1 percent; regular gasoline, 6.8 percent; diesel, 1.5 percent; kerosene, 3.8 percent; bunker oil, 6.4 percent, and LPG, 7.7 percent.

Bunye was quoting Energy Secretary Raphael Lotilla who spoke on the radio program of Vice President Noli de Castro a few days ago.

The presidential spokesperson also said the country should "enter amid the coming oil prices, which he said, was "the paramount issue of the day."

Employers told: Pay new wages

BASIC wages or face prosecution.

This warning was made yesterday by Labor Secretary Patricia Sto. Tomas to employers who fail to give their workers the new minimum wage.

Sto. Tomas said employers who would not comply with the mandated wage increase would be fined by up to P100,000 and face a jail sentence.

But struggling companies need not worry, Sto. Tomas said employers who cannot afford to give the wage hike should inform the department about their predicaments.

"Bang hindi nasa kapangyarihan ng emisyonan wage, dumirekta tayo ng exemption (If we cannot pay the minimum wage, we should ask for an exemption)," she said in a statement posted on the website of the Department of Labor and Employment.

According to the National Wages and Productivity Commission, a company could file for exemption from the salary hike within 75 days after the publication of the implementing rules and regulations (IRR) of the wage order.

The P16 for the P25 wage hike in the National Capital Region is set to be signed next week and will be published subsequently. The IRR for Regions 3, 4-A and 12 have been signed and are expected to be published next week.

The P25 additional pay granted to minimum wage earners in Metro Manila, which took effect on June 16, is the highest among the pay raises in the country. The amount was added to the basic daily wage and not to the cost of living allowance so some employers counted. Cecilio D. Salaverria

Angara says fraud caused KNP loss

MANILA was the sandstorm of Sen. Panfilo Lacson which split the opposition, caused the defeat in the 2004 election of the Koalisyon ng Nagkakaisang Pilipino's presidential bet Fernando Poe Jr. and his running mate, then Sen. Loren Legarda. Sen. Edgardo Angara said yesterday.

"The details of this 'massive electoral cheating' have been fully documented by the lawyers of the KNP which had fielded Poe and Legarda. The KNP lawyers have filed an electoral protest on behalf of the opposition presidential and vice presidential candidates," Angara said.

Angara was taking pains to debunk a Sunday commentary of historian columnist Bobby Oliveros-Cayanan which quoted Angara as saying soon after the elections that the opposition lost not because of cheating but because it was "bitterly divided."

Angara, in a statement, branded Cayanan's report "an bagay na Cayanan-tallied and Congress canvassed election results of 2004."

The opposition senator, who formed the KNP and drafted Poe as its standard-bearer. Following a split in the opposition Lakas ng Demokratikong Pilipino party until he had already articulated his views on what he had since called the "khaki-electoral result" of the 2004 polls in a statement he gave at the floor of the congressional canvass.

Lacson and several congressmen in the LDP mounted their own presidential campaign with the former Philippine National Police chief as the standard-bearer.

Lacson and Angara had been at loggerheads politically and personally since the time. Norman Bordadora

End 'jueteng' probe, Bunye urges solons

By Christine O. Avendaño, Norman Bordadora and Gil Cabacungan Jr.

PRESS Secretary Ignacio Bunye yesterday called for the House to conclude its inquiry on "jueteng" payoffs, saying the money had gathered enough inputs to legislate the necessary measures.

"The real purpose of the investigation should be to aid in legislation," Bunye told DWIN radio, adding that it should not be a fishing expedition.

According to the press secretary, it was no longer the work of the executive to investigate the government officials that watchmen had linked to gambling payoffs, but agencies like the Office of the Ombudsman and the Department of Justice.

More importantly, Bunye said, any case of the witnesses presented or yet to be presented would be able to link President Macapagal-Arroyo to the illegal numbers game contrary to earlier claims.

"[Jaguar Congressman] Arthur[ur] Defensor [Jr.] and [Cavite Congressman] Erineo Maliksi [are] witnesses who would really implicate the President," he said.

"I'll tell you, since the jueteng probe comes to an end," Bunye wrote in his weekly column on the web, "How Real the Palace."

He said senators "have better things to do other than play Perry Mason."

Sen. Manuel Villar, chair of the Senate committee on public order, said they were planning to wrap up their investigation on hearing other nothing new and significant came out of Jose Pidal's six-hour hearing.

"We are considering wrapping it up on or [the Wednesday or Thursday] after the [coming hearing scheduled this week]. We have witnesses [in on hand and even Archbishop Oca said he only had one more [witness] or even none at all," Villar told the Inquirer yesterday.

Senate President Franklin Drilon also issued a statement calling on Villar's committee and the committee on games and amusement chaired by Sen. Manuel Lapid to come up with a decision with the public hearings.

Opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson said the information gathered from the jueteng probe was not worthy enough.

"[What] is the [rush reason Malacañang wants to stop the probe? Is it afraid something bigger will be discovered?" Lacson said.

Ebdane told reporters on Friday that he had met more witnesses who rose to testify on how jueteng millions found their way to the President's campaign kitty in 2004. But the witness declined not to take the stand because he reportedly received threats.

GMA can rest easy for now, says opposition

It's [the] so-called rules before the senate, after the massive protests spawned by the jueteng payoffs scandal and accusations of poll fraud, Malacañang said its occupants can relax a bit for now.

Opposition officials said there was no [de facto against President Macapagal-Arroyo would most likely take place during her State of the Nation Address on July 25.

But Ace Custer, chair of the National Coordinating Council of Volunteers, said their posters of protests for different groups would continue before the SONA.

"We, for example, would be there in Congress for the inquiry into the wiretapped tapes," he said. The [ere] are scheduled this week.

Gil Abo of the Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas said they would mobilize an even bigger anti-corruption rally during the SONA.

Abo said the KMP is planning another rally on June 30. Other leftist groups are planning similar activity in the coming days.

Sin Prodigy [more than] 1,000 protesters surrounded Mr. Arroyo's motorcade in Makati on Friday.

Despite the protests, Mr. Arroyo remained in high spirits. Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the President was pleased with the release of Robert "Bong" Jaworski and 13 mountaineers [from] Philippine Church's compliment to officials in the country. (Lira del Puerto, C. Avendaño, AFP)

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China military assist to RP does not faze US, says exec

By Veh Custodio

NEW YORK CITY—The Philippine government's unprecedented move of obtaining military aid from China has not spurred concern from the ire traditional ally the United States, according to a top US defense official.

China, whose defense budget has drawn many scrutiny from the world superpower, pledged to provide Manila last May with $1.2 million in military aid—in the form of engineering equipment—and struck a bilateral agreement to hold regular consultations on regional security issues.

"We've discussed this with your government, with your defense secretary, and we're satisfied with the explanations," the official told the Inquirer in a briefing at the Pentagon last week. A representative from the paper was with a group of Asian journalists invited by the US state department to tour the country.

"We feel that the Philippines was required to give us an explanation," the official said. "But they explained how it was in the national interest of the Philippines to expand defense relations with all countries, including China."

He said Philippine officials called attention to the country's "important, defined bilateral and political relationship with China, and [he] felt it was natural that [the two countries have] a sort of term by dialogue."

"I think we understand that," he said. "We appreciate how that relationship is going to evolve and grow. We expect the Philippines' government to talk with us [if they want to talk to]."

The official, however, expressed Washington's concern about Beijing's "dramatic" military upgrade which accompanied its now-fueled economic might.

"The US government 'respects China's right to assert itself internationally' and to safeguard its sea lanes and communications in view of its booming economy, especially one that is highly dependent on energy imports, the official said.

This, he added, Washington still wanted Chinese leaders to be more "transparent" about how their planned ease in military might.

Debriefed, delegations from both countries hold yearly consultative talks, but the issues outside China were willing to share about its military plans had been "a point of concern" in the meetings, the official said.

"The key for us is to be able to better understand—and we've said it repeatedly to the Chinese—their intentions with regard to the significant growth in military power that is taking place," the official said.

"Capabilities we can judge, but the issue is one of intent. The other half of the mission is intent. Has it been plan to use those capabilities, what are your driving reasons for... this dramatically increased military spending, particularly the procurement of four-th generation weapon systems and technologies?"

Asked by the Inquirer when Beijing's recent military aid to Manila revealed about China's "intent," he replied, "They are determined to engage regionally, reaching out, establishing relationships."

RP seen to improve NoKor ties

By Nikko Dizon

THE LIGHTEST ambassador to South Korea said the Philippines intends to strengthen its relations with North Korea to help ease tensions in the Korean Peninsula and encourage more international contact with the isolated communist country.

"It is one area of lessening tensions. You have to engage North Korea and let [it] see the other side of the world and try to cut down the wall of distrust," Ambassador Alexandra Villaroman was quoted as saying in an interview in The Korea Herald on June 6.

The article was posted on the website of Korea is One (www.korea-is-one.org), an organization comprised of European individuals supporting peace and the unification of the two Koreas.

Sought for comment on the ambassador's statement, Foreign Affairs spokesperson Gilberto Asuncion said there was nothing wrong with establishing trade relations with North Korea since the Philippines had diplomatic relations with Pyongyang.

Villaroman said in the article: "You have to bring them [the North] out as part of a regular member of the international community. For trade with them more. You exchange visits."

According to the article, North Korea's trade minister is due to visit Manila this month for a "bilateral agreement on the promotion of investments."

"You see? It have to expand bilateral trade relations," Villaroman said.

Filipino journalists, including Senate President Franklin Drilon, are reportedly set to visit Pyongyang this year.

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CHEd to appeal Palace decision on AMA nursing

By Alcuin Papa

THE COMMISSION on Higher Education (CHEd) said over the weekend it would appeal a Malacañang decision allowing the AMA Computer College branch in Makati City to offer nursing courses.

CHEd legal service director Jocelyn Camilo Yuhas-Sison said they would submit their position on the matter to the Palace when they had 15 days to file an appeal. She said the Malacañang decision was not considered final because the CHEd only received its copy of the order, which was signed on June 3, last Friday.

She said that early last year, more than 200 schools applied for permits to offer nursing programs for school year 2004-05. The CHEd's regional offices nationwide, however, approved only 98 applications after a three-month screening.

After the applications were forwarded to the CHEd Central Office screening committee, only 52 schools were granted permission to offer nursing courses. In May 2005, the 46 other schools, including AMA Makati, filed appeals.

Sison said CHEd took note of the appeals and gave the 46 schools until Sept. 30, 2004, to comply with requirements, in the case of the nonviolation period on Oct. 30, 2004, only 23 out of the 46 appellant schools were granted permits.

She said most of the disapproved applications were due to the schools' lack of a base hospital. Sison said that under CHED Memorandum Order No. 28, a base hospital should have at least a 100-bed capacity and an occupancy rate not lower than 80 percent.

In addition, a base hospital should offer medical, surgical, obstetrical, gynecological, pediatric, psychiatric, communicable diseases control, community health, nursing administration, and research and laboratory services, among others.

Sison said the 23 remaining schools followed up their appeals with the CHEd, including AMA Makati which, however, also elevated its case to Malacañang.

In January 2005, 16 of the 23 schools were given permits. "With these actions, we continued to the assurance of the delivery of quality education," Sison said.

She added, "We are not unreasonable. We gave them so many chances to comply. They (the schools) answered except for AMA."

Sison pointed out that it was only this month that AMA submitted documents certifying it would tap the Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Hospital as its base hospital.

She said officials of the school were "playing in two fields" when they submitted their appeal to Malacañang while continuing their appeal at the CHED.

In a six-page decision, Malacañang ordered CHEd to give AMA-Makati a permit to offer nursing courses because CHEd Memo No. 28 had not been officially logged in the record of official orders, hence rendering it void.

ABS-CBN bares more newsroom changes

By Ricuir Pupa

THE ABS-CBN network announced other appointments in its ongoing reorganization aimed at taking back the top position in primetime TV news.

In a statement to be released, the network also confirmed the appointments of former Cable News Network Jakarta bureau chief Sheila Reese as head of the network's News and Current Affairs division. Reese was initially taken in as a consultant in the division in January.

Reese's assumption of the position was reported by some days ago.

The network's statement also confirmed that former ABS-CBN senior reporter Cherie Villa was regaining the network as head of News Gathering. Villa was Manila bureau chief of Reuters TV min.

Lucky Cruz-Valdez, the assignment said, would continue as head of the Canvas Affairs group, in addition to her responsibilities over the TV Patrol evening newscast.

Beth Frondoso will remain as supervising producer of TV Patrol, in addition to her new responsibilities over breaking news advisories.

Vince Rodriguez, one of the network's veteran executive producers and news managers, will continue to head the Studio 23 news operation.

JR Gampig was appointed head of News Engineering. Dimpig is a licensed electronics and communications engineer who has been with the Lopez Group for 10 years, having had broadcasting responsibilities at Sky Cable and ABS-CBN.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Monday, June 27, 2005
12th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading: Gen 19:1-6.12-22
Gospel: Matthew 8:18-22

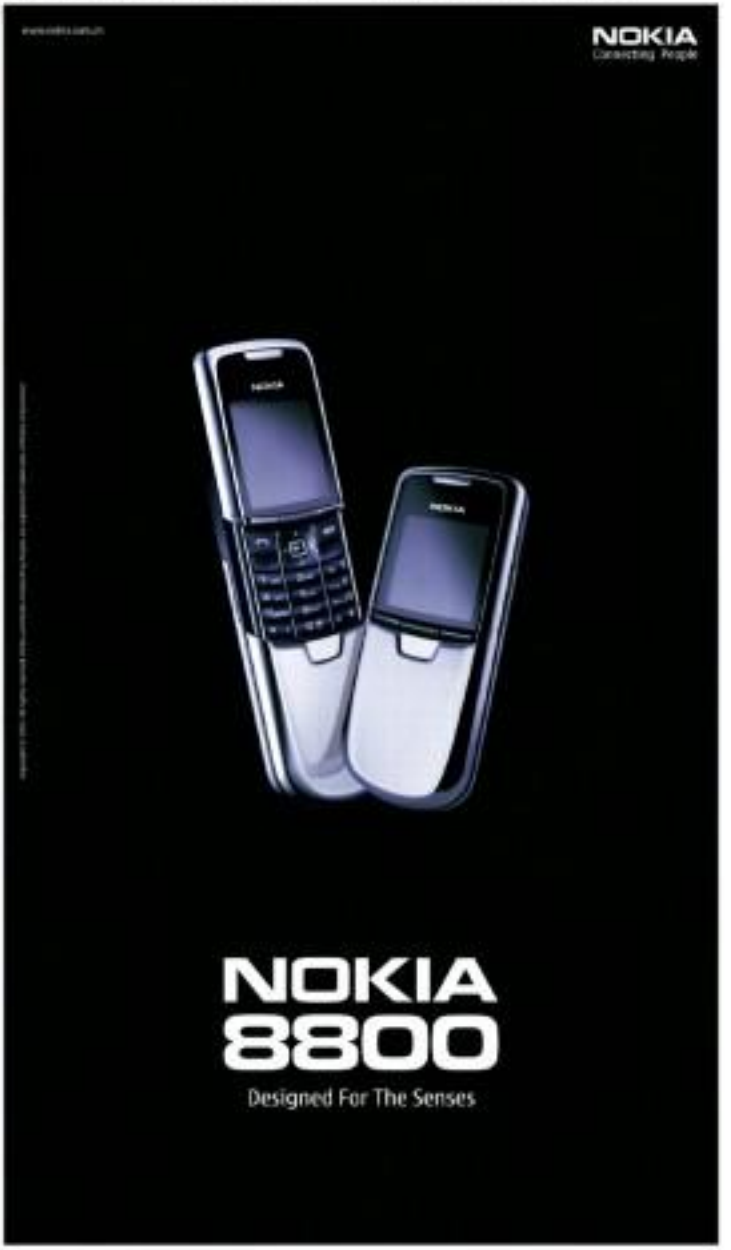
When Jesus saw the crowd press around him, he gave orders to cross to the other shore. A teacher of the Law approached him and said, "Master, I will follow you wherever you go." Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes and birds have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head."

Another disciple said to him, "Lord, let me go and bury my father first." But Jesus answered him, "Follow me, and let the dead bury their own dead."

Commentary

Again, the crowds are all around Jesus. Their need is public and Jesus avoids not to the other shore and consider of the less surprising comes after Jesus saying, "Master, I will follow you wherever you go" Jesus is realistic and lets the discipleship cost an easy road. Jesus tells that even Jesus have holes and the birds have nests but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head. Jesus has no earthly home his home is rooted in the Father and he belongs to all the world to all the crowds, massive numbers of people but unsatisfying he calls to security, sanctuary and those who follow him to all know Jesus all the world as home and to place really that is there alone. And the pressing demands and needs of others take precedence over family ties and friendly ties must keep their priorities but we must be sure that we don't look for any excuse to slip away from the strongholds of a vocation. Is this really our Master and do we follow him everywhere?

Claretian Publications, Inc., 4 Missouri St., UP Village, Diliman, Quezon City, 1101 P.O. Box 4, Diliman, 1100 Quezon City, Tel. 921-5444 loc. 305-7470, E-mail: cpi@claret.org, Website: http://www.claret.org (Claretian Publications Inc.) A non-profit service of the Claretians in the Philippines



Deadly honor code lives in parts of Mindanao

A WIDOWER holds the .22-cal. bullet that killed his sons while they were preparing breakfast one morning. A member of a rival clan shot her and her husband in a revenge killing. AFP

IN PARTS of southern Philippines, where an ancient Muslim-style honor code still thrives, all it takes to spark an orgy of bloodshed is something as trivial as a cockfight gone sour.

And so it did. A Sunday duel in 1998 led to two killings, a kidnapping and pillage at two branches of a Maranao clan stoked a dispute the way it had been done for generations.

First, Datumuda Bala's nephew killed a second cousin accused of the crime.

Then, in a revenge attack, Bala's husband's construction business in Marawi City was targeted by the dead man's family—already feared one of its proudest clans—killed a relative and kidnapped another.

'Rido'

English professor Bala, whose father died in a clan war sparked by cattle-rustling in the early 1930s, says buoying the butchery under the terms of the honor code, called rido, remains a thorny point.

"Rido has been with all of us, Maranao and non-Muslims alike, since Adam and Eve were taken out of paradise. Rido will stay with us," she sighs.

Rido in local Muslim dialects refers to killings and other forms of violence sparked by procedural personal affront.

"A violation of the deep sense of personal honor rationalizes revenge and will legitimize killing someone, whether he is good or bad and regardless of whether the cause of the conflict was legal or illegal," says Ismail Xandiao of Mindanao State University's (MSU) Institute of Technology.

Studies jointly funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the Asia Foundation have documented 1,320 clan conflicts since 1990 in 11 provinces of Mindanao, home to a 6-million-strong Muslim minority.

The vicious cycle of violence has left 4,513 people dead and more than 3,000 injured or missing.

Researchers from Ateneo de Zamboanga University and Notre Dame University say deadly family quarrels have erupted over the flimsiest disputes, such as women eloping with men who were out of favor with their respective families or who failed to pay a dowry. They also break out over land disputes, electoral contests, or unpaid debts.

Blurred

Sometimes lasting for generations, the deadly feuds between family branches, rival clans or different ethnic groups, have blurred the town of the bloodshed in a region that has seen some 120,000 deaths amid a relatively recent Muslim separatist guerrilla war.

On Mindanao, clan conflict is closely tied to "problems of governance" on the resource island and the ready availability of guns in the black market, says Alfonso Ayed Lingga of the Institute of Occupational Studies, based in Cotabato City.

Instead of going to the police or the courts, arawing parties stick to settle their own disputes.

Shooting is the most common method of revenge.

More guns

"The initial wave of rebellion when a conflict becomes a full-blown rido [ends] buy more firearms," says Moctar Matuan, also a professor at MSU, who has studied 337 clan wars in the Cotabato region.

Jowell Catamba of Ateneo de Davao University estimates there are at least 33,000 unlicensed firearms in the hands of civilians in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, a self-rule area made up of five of the 22 provinces in the clan studies.

With heavy firepower brought to bear, clan wars have brought about long-term destruction of homes and farms, he adds.

"More often than not, the origin of a conflict in Mindanao is due to rido," says Army Maj. Ochoco Hermosa, a member of a government commission monitoring a two-year-old truce between the government and the separatist Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"Rido is undermining the gains of the ongoing talks," he adds, referring to peace negotiations between the government and the MILF being held in Malaysia.

Comrades

Hermosa says "people involved in clan wars seldom face prosecution to see justice system or end up in prison."

Among the Lanao Muslims, "recourse to formal law is deemed cowardice," says Mondilenda Dona of Xavier University in Cagayan de Oro City.

In the case of Bala's nephew, he was sentenced to a guerrilla camp run by the MILF instead of a government jail. Bala, a killer serves a prison term in a government jail, he is "liable for retaliation" once the sentence is served, says Dona.

Warring parties use third-party conciliators and pay blood money or indemnity to reach a settlement. Peace deals are sealed by both parties swearing over the Koran, the Muslim holy book, and the initial aggressor throws a feast to celebrate the end of hostilities.

Bala says his family's dispute was resolved after mediation by a neutral relative and the dead was sealed with a thanksgiving feast. The kidnapped construction worker was released and released unharmed.

But settlements are not common. Of the 1,320 rido wars the studies documented, 60 percent remain unresolved.

Not every Muslim subscribes to the ancient code.

Rido is common to "most of the isolated, underdeveloped and misenlightened tribes of our country," says Ibrahim Paglas, a lawmaker of a turbulent Maguindanao clan.

Paglas, a former town mayor who now runs a 3,000-ha family-owned banana plantation, lost his father and four brothers to clan warfare but forbade retaliation as his family's contribution to bringing Mindanao toward political modernity.

"The families of those who executed my family are working in the plantation," he says. "They had been forgiven." AFP

Traders beat museum execs to galleon treasure

From page A1

SCRAP dealer Charlie Asuncion displays the Spanish gold and silver coins and the metal parts of the sunken galleon he had bought from a fisherman of Bajo-Bajo in Aklan

Bellena said she had asked the National Museum, through Assistant Director Emelito Jadulco, to send coin experts and divers to Bajo-Bajo to look for the remaining treasure and other artifact galleons in the area.

She said that as early as December last year, she had heard stories about the treasure found off the island but could not find people who could confirm them.

Risky

Nilo Asuncion, 25, of Pigu, and his cousin, Charlie Asuncion, 36, who now lives in Barangay Kawit in Legazpi, disclosed that some of those who bought and hid the coins wanted to sell them to the Legazpi Museum so they could make more money. But their wives rejected or do so for fear of being penalized as conspirators.

"This is the very reason why it took us quite some time before we revealed this and what we connected Mrs. Bellena instead of the authorities in Bajo-Bajo, the police or the military," Nilo said.

He and three were around in January since late last year when local government officials and policemen collected coins and historical relic underwater treasure hunting so divers could find more items.

Out of curiosity, Charlie said he bought four gold and five silver coins, which he believed were the only ones left of the old Spanish coins recovered from the sunken galleon.

He said he bought the coins for P5,500 each.

"I was just interested to see for myself, as I asked one fisherman to show me a sample. At first, he was reluctant to show it unless I would really buy it. So I bought it and the others. But from the time I showed them to Mrs. Bellena, I became aware of the coins' importance and decided not to sell them to a certain Japanese collector," Charlie said in Bicolano.

Isabel 2

The four gold coins were dated 1862, 1865 (two pieces) and 1868, while the five silver coins were dated 1792, 1801, 1867, 1883 and 1887.

Bellena noted that the name of Carolus II de Hispania was inscribed on the 1792 coin; Carolus IV de Hispania on the 1801 coin; Isabel 2 and Peninsulae Ultramar on the 1867 coin; Alfonso XII Peninsulae Ultramar on the 1883 coin; and Alfonso XII Peninsulae Ultramar on 1885.

"Most of the remaining Spanish coins that Charlie has bought have deteriorated value upon considering its physical condition of being discernible and exceptionally fine, for only two of the silver coins have slightly worn features—the 1883 and the 1887," Bellena said.

Numismatists collect coins not just because of their historical importance but because of their intrinsic value: it could value usually increases with time, but most of all, rarity is the foremost determinant in grading coins.

An official of Barangay Pigu, who also has a house in Barangay Victory Village in the poor area of Legazpi, confirmed the stories about the sunken treasures quietly gathered by the fishermen. Due to his position in the village, he requested not to be named.

Blast fishers

Both Nilo and Charlie revealed how frenzied the local fishermen in their barangay had become, to the point that most of them stopped fishing for months because of the huge amount of money they got from gathering and selling coins.

Nilo recounted that a group of Islan fishers in their barangay accidentally discovered late last year that they had blown up just containing gold and silver coins.

He said some of the fishermen turned underwater and were surprised to find other items such as antique cups, forks, tableware, more-or-less garments and metal scraps from the sunken ship.

Aware of scrap, Charlie never thought that what he had bought was a part of the sunken vessel. He bought the piece for only P60 per kilo.

"I often come back to my hometown to buy metal scraps. He was told me that it came from a sunken vessel until my business buyer told me that the was not an ordinary metal because of its durability. Compared with the metals today, it is not welded and is made of pure bronze and copper metals," Charlie said.

Sanctuary

Historians and anthropologists, both here and abroad, have considered Bajo-Bajo island a sanctuary for galleons, based on historical documents provided by the Legazpi Museum.

Due to strong waves from the Pacific Ocean, many Spanish galleons coming from Seaports found Bajo-Bajo a safe haven for their voyage to other parts of Albay. But some of them reportedly sank off the coast of Bajo-Bajo.

"So, most likely, there are still many treasures left. That's why we are taking for the expedition of the National Museum on this matter before it's too late," Bellena said.

In the 18th century, the Spanish frequented Bajo-Bajo to prepare for an all-out war against Moro pirates. This went on for 100 years.

Bellena said Bajo-Bajo was believed to be the springboard for the Moros who raided big towns in Bicol.

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'It's Not My Voice Movement' urged

From page A1

record that it is not his or her voice on the tapes and that no one person is left to mop up.

The tapes purportedly contain conversations between President Macapagal-Arroyo and an election official about rigging last year's polls.

The ingenious, if oblivious, "It's Not My Voice Movement" was suggested by a University of the Philippines law professor Gonzalo Salcedo on Friday in which he explained the legal ramifications of the controversy.

"I can't understand why the President, when asked if it was her voice on the tape, would answer: 'I won the election fair and square,'" said Bartolo Lozano, the UP vice president for legal affairs.

He said the identity of the voices on the tapes should first be established before anyone could talk about violations of the Anti-Wiretapping Law.

"If you're caught playing the tapes, and the parties deplane and charges you with violations of the Anti-Wiretapping Law, welcome it," he said.

"The prosecution would have to prove that someone's privacy had been violated, which, in this case, could mean 'bringing down the government,'" Lozano said.

"For your defense, all you need to do is wait for the prosecution to fail," he said. Authorities would have to prove that the accused "knowingly and willfully" listened to a tape that had been wiretapped, Lozano added.

His government agency had gone out of its way to present the people with proof that the tape had been wiretapped, he said. Until then, no one could be convicted of violating the Anti-Wiretapping Law, Lozano summarized up to bring the voter, he said.

It was at this point that Lozano suggested, jokingly, to launch the "It's Not My Voice Movement."

Since the controversy broke, Ms Arroyo has kept mum on the tapes.

Press release threats

Hosted by the UP Center for Integrative and Development Studies, the "Spotlight" forum's panel of speakers included journalism professor Chito Sta Romana, engineer Raul Sunoya Concio, and speech and voice experts Jose Lallagunan and Arlene Bongcaya.

Sta Romana talked about the impact of the controversy on the media profession, and the transgression on media freedom. He read the "press release" by the justice department against media that had just hit uploading the taped conversations.

He said the Philippines was far from being democratic by this anti-Internet bombardment.

The 50-year-old leader of Akbayan Demokratiko, who placed fourth in the 2004 presidential election, slammed the continued silence of Ms Arroyo on the "Hello-gate" controversy. He said Malacañang could not hide behind legalisticism.

"The problem is they deserve, err, they don't seem to resign. That's the issue. This is shameful," said Reyes.

Referring to the audio tape, Reyes said it was the President herself who had determined the character of the 2004 elections, while Bunye released the evidence. Bunye played the recordings to reporters on June 6.

President pure-boy warned the administration was now "boxing" the opposition to file no impeachment case against Ms Arroyo on the pretext of upholding constitutional due process.

"Realistically it will be very difficult to initiate the impeachment proceedings against the President. The presidentialists can guarantee sometime the overwhelming majority in the House and Speaker Jose de Venecia Jr. will see to it that enough of them will toe the line by saying that the resolution to impeach is tested, "the minority leader said.

He gave, there are only 35 minority representatives out of 230 House members.

Pimentel said the resignations of Ms Arroyo and Dr Cielito reinstated the only stable executive, timed alternative "to get out of the mess she put herself into."

Pimentel said Ms Cuneta must also resign since he, like Ms Arroyo, was elected under questionable circumstances.

Tyranny of numbers

Upon their resignation, Pimentel and Senate President Franklin Drilon would, in accord with the Constitution, become acting president who will call for new elections to fill the vacancies within 45 days.

Pimentel said the whole nation witnessed how the President's party functionally and concomitantly used the tyranny of numbers to foil every motion of the minority to open the ballot boxes in Congress and examine the certificates of canvass, statements of votes and election returns in the face of glaring inflections of irregularities committed in the 2004 elections.

Pimentel said he would continue to denounce the administration's policy of "stonewalling" on the issue of gloating inflections of irregularities committed in the 2004 elections.

He said impeachment was a highly divisive and very problematic exercise at present by the aborted impeachment trial of Estrada. (President Joseph Estrada).

If an impeachment against Ms Arroyo will not be satisfactorily resolved at end up in stalemate, the nation will again be plunged into a constitutional crisis, he warned said. This could have potentially disastrous consequences, the opposition senator warned. With reports from (Wilnelito O. Gonzalez), Norman Bordadora and Jeff C. Cabacungan

Snap election perfectly legal–Roco

From page A1

"Is there some thing that's broken and [unclear]? Is there no one righteous anymore? Sodom, at least, had one, Lot. So, there no there's none, there's still hope," said Roco.

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MEMBERS of Partido ng Manggagawa call for President Macapagal-Arroyo's resignation during a protest at the People Power Monument on EDSA. Photo by

Party-list group snubs summit

From page A1

amendments had held joint public hearings on the issues.

Montano said the timing of the meeting of the technical working group was suspicious since it could be a ploy by a family check and coalition building.

"But it will not stop the broadcasting and strengthening anti-GMA united front," said Montano. Montano also said that the Arroyo administration had lost the moral ascendancy to lead the nation.

"We urge the Speaker to add his voice to the increasing people's clamor for GMA to speak up," said Mariano, suggesting that Dr. Venecia drop the so-called unity talks because it would only fuel more anti-Arroyo dissent.

Mr. Arroyo has refused to confirm or deny if it was her voice on the tape in which a woman could be heard asking then Election Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano if the wonder was by at least a million votes.

"Like we said before, we will never allow ourselves to be used to save the increasingly isolated Arroyo regime," he said.

Illegitimate?

Bolivar, for his part, said in a text message: "There is really nothing to unite with the Arroyo administration. Why negotiate to discuss reforms with an illegitimate president? The political summit is being used by the administration to consolidate the ranks."

Bolivar urged other political parties to avoid the showing today and the larger political summit scheduled for July 11 to 12 and "initiate plans for the ouster to be hoisted and support the [congressional inquiries] by demanding that the tapes be heard."

He explained that the reforms the people wanted to see were the same reforms the administration did not want to implement. These include the repeal of fiscal deregulation law, privatization of power generation and distribution, and a stop to land conversion.

"The GMA government wants approval for policies that will allow foreign firms 100-percent ownership of the country's resources. He will never support that," said Bolivar.

Friendship Day revives RP-Spain historical ties

From page A1

Emilio Aguinaldo of the First Philippine Republic issued a decree in 1899 proclaiming that the 33 Spanish soldiers who surrendered to Filipino troops in Baler [Bataan in Aguinaldo's hometown] in Quezon—after a siege that lasted 11 months—"should not be considered as prisoners but, on the contrary, as friends, and as a consequence, they shall be lionized by the General Staff, with the necessary safe conduct to enable them to return to their country."

While the decree recognized the bravery of the Spanish soldiers who defended for 341 days the last Spanish garrison in the Philippines at the Baler church against a siege by a larger Filipino revolutionary force, it also brought credit to the gallantry and to the nobility of the Filipino revolutionary leadership during the twilight of the Spanish empire.

The Baler siege has been extolled by historians as one of the longest sieges in modern military history. It has been celebrated in texts as an epic saga in its ground military tradition.

The names of the 33 survivors have become part of Spanish military lore as "Los Heroes de Filipinas", and a song, "Los Ultimos," has been dedicated to them and continues to be popular today in Spain. The song is played in almost any Spanish bistro.

Of interest to the Filipinos is the fact that the Baler garrison held for 11 months after the capitulation of the Spanish capital in Manila on Aug 13, 1898 on finding American forces in the Philippines poised in a siege of the capital.

Transfer to Iloilo

Iloilo secured the patriots in December 1899 when Gen. Diego de los Rios, who was appointed by Madrid as governor general after the fall of Manila, transferred the seat of government to Iloilo City as a temporary capital, already the country's second most populous city as well as its cultural center.

The choice of Iloilo as the last capital after Manila was rational and followed the logic of its history. Iloilo, with its deep water port, was during the second half of the 19th century, the early enclave of European capitalism and the colony's entrepot- links to the emerging globalized trading system long before the term "globalization" was even coined.

De los Rios surrendered the capital to the mayor of Iloilo City on Dec. 23. The Revolutionary Army led by Gen. Martin Delgado, had by then reinvested Iloilo City.

Following the departure of the Spanish garrison for Zamboanga, Delgado's troops, reinforced by expeditionary forces from Luzon led by Gen. Manuel Tinio, made a triumphal entry into Iloilo, according to the book by the American historian John Foreman, "on the strains of music and waving of banners."

General Delgado renamed Plaza de Alfonso Doce as "Plaza Libertad," the center of the world's commemoration and the site of political rallies.

The triumphant Visayan liberation army soon went to experience American hostility that made a ruin of Aguinaldo who was embroiled by the American troops from taking part in the capture of Manila at the precise that they were aiding the Filipinos in gaining their independence from Spain.

Americans arrive

The dust of the Iloilo victory march had hardly settled when on Dec. 27, a 5,000-strong American military force led by Gen. Henry Miller was transported by a naval flotilla to the Iloilo harbor to demand the surrender of the city.

According to Foreman, Miller's force had been dispatched to Iloilo to allow the signing of the Treaty of Paris on Dec. 10, 1898, through which Spain ceded the colony apparently under duress, to the United States, to make a demonstration of American might while the treaty was pending ratification by the US Senate.

While waiting for instructions from Washington, Miller bought time and made overtures with the Filipino leaders in Iloilo to allow his men to go ashore "to have a promenade" of the city's attractions, already known as "the Queen City of the South."

The mansion of Capts. Epifanio Concepcion, an aide to General Delgado, gives an account of the negotiations between Filipino authorities and General Miller.

According to the memoirs, Miller said, "I request permission to go down to the town Iloilo "to representation of General E. Otis, the commander of US forces in the Philippines. Miller wanted to "take a carriage to visit Jaro and Molo."

But the Ilonga official, Javier Young said: "We are sorry we can't answer the request without the consent of President Aguinaldo."

The Filipinos, however, allowed the officers to take only a promenade. The American were not interested merely in a promenade. They wanted their officers "to help in the administration of the customs house now by Filipinos. The Americans said there were many complaints against customs for "inefficiency" etc.

Insult resented

A Visayan official, Fermin Salinas resented the insult. "We are not a stick of sugar which can be bought by American dollars," he told them. "We have struggled for our liberty like you. We still maintain with the struggle until we triumph or die. We are, we are not Cuban slaves who can be bought without our consent."

Miller begged leave. Another conference was set for Feb. 12 1899.

Meanwhile, Filipino troops from Sta. Barbara, General Delgado's headquarters, and from all of Panay were mobilized and massed in Jaro.

The Americans did not wait for the deadline to lapse. Miller issued an ultimatum. He said all Filipino forces should surrender by 5 p.m. of Feb 12, otherwise "Iloilo will be bombarded."

Miller said that American forces had been fired at by Filipino troops in Fort San Pedro, resulting in the wounding of an American Marine.

A US flotilla, composed of the warships Baltimore, Concord, Boston and Petrel, which lay at anchor in Guimaras Strait, began to shell Iloilo upon the expiration of the deadline. On Feb. 14, American troops landed at Iloilo and took it by storm.

Thus started the war of independence in the Visayas against the United States. Filipino troops fought the Americans in pitched battles in towns around Iloilo City. The resistance continued until December 1900 when Delgado surrendered.

SPORTS TV
Compiled by E. Pangilinan

MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

SPORTS

Editor: Rodolfo S. Palmaroy

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Beermen back in Finals

LUIS HEUSEL Beer's Ace Custo (center) and Nic Belasco contest the rebound of Red Bull's Cyrus Baguio last night's game. —EDDIE ALINEA

By Jun Navarro

ENRICO Villanueva left the court with a broken nose and Red Bull Barako followed him two hours later with a broken heart.

Denny Ildefonso's jumper with eight seconds of a second left ousted San Miguel Beer in a thrilling 96-94 win over the Barako that tied the Bowmen to the Game Maker PBA Fiesta Conference Finals last night at the Araneta Coliseum.

Ildefonso received the feature pass from a tapped Dondon Hontiveros at the baseline and lofted a short, high-arching jumper over Earl Barron that ended the Bombo's string of "great escapes" and silenced the Barangay Ginebra bandwagon fans in the Philippine Arena after two seasons.

"It wasn't part of the play," said San Miguel Beer coach Jong Uichico, referring to the ace passed by Hontiveros following a time-in. Ace Custo then led to Ildefonso's game-winner.

"I guess today is the right time to describe what happened over there."

The Barako bowlers took down 14 points down and still had a shot at sending the game into overtime until Custo delivered a last-gasp turnover with Cortes inbound a bit past halfcourt of the Beermen as time expired.

Villanueva left the game with eight minutes and 51 seconds left in the first period after Cortes accidentally threw an elbow that fractured Villanueva's nose bridge. He was wheeled off to the locker room and was later brought to the Chinese General Hospital.

Villanueva left after scoring Red Bull's first basket following a 2-0 run for the Beermen that opened Game-4 of the best-of-five series.

Coach Yeng Guiao was forced to shuffle Villanueva and Rimstead Abarrientos to work alongside the servers Ian Sangalang in the game.

The Beermen wrapped up the series in 3-1 to secure their sixth title appearance in 15 conference meets under Uichico and 27th overall since 1975. The last time the Beermen made it to the Finals was in the 2003 Reinforced Conference.

The scores:

SAN MIGUEL (96)—Cabagnot 20, Custo 17, Ildefonso 11, Belasco 9, Reyes 10, Arnaiz 6, Lingad 5, Lastimosa 4, Sangalang 4, Abarrientos 4, Cabatu 2, Espinas 0, Ayaay 0, Ramirez 0, Villanueva 0.

BARAKO (94)—Barron 27, Hontiveros 15, Cortes 13, Ibanes 11, Baguio 7, Pinto 6, Mamaril 5, Yu 4, Ong 4, Ilagan 2, Ybañez 0, Cabahug 0, Cruz 0.

Quarterscores: 16-15, 41-40, 66-66, 96-94.

Torres Asian GP long jump queen

MARIVELLA Torres captured the second gold medal to emerge at the long jump sports of the Asian Grand Prix and underscored a successful campaign for Filipino track and field stars in the opening action which wound up Saturday in Bangkok, Thailand.

Torres leaped 6.16 m, just a centimeter short of the national mark, in bagging her second gold for the RP campaign better bid by Rigel Sea Miguel Cuya and the Pilot Lieutenant Rosemarie.

She dominated the first leg in Indonesia before settling for the bronze at the finals leg in Singapore where SEA Games champion Lerma Rabanes Cuevas snatched the gold.

NCAA junior cage wars get under way today

THERE will be a lot of new faces when the junior division of the 81st NCAA basketball season unfolds today at the Cuneta Astrodome.

NCAA new rookies on their own, the San Beda Cubs lock off their title defense against the Philippine Christian U Baby Christians 2 pm.

The Cubs, who are gunning for a fourth straight crown, lost the core players of their champion squad, including co-MVPs Ryan Arana Menor and Jay R Papasin.

The Lemon Squeezers still also parade an almost entirely new roster with Christopher Alas, son of longtime coach Louie Alas, leading the 11 rookies in their lineup.

The Squires, who lost to the Cubs in last year's finals, will begin the tournament help elsewhere at 2:30 p.m. Jeremiah M. Reyes

Tired of SUBSTANDARD and INFERIOR truck bodies on the market?
CENTRO

Thywillbedone does it right

By Edwin Villanueva, Contributor

THYWILLBEDONE responded to Ogilvie Aguila's vigorous prodding down the stretch to outclass Speed Advantage and capture the LV Ongpin Cup, second leg of the 2005 Triple Crown series, yesterday at the San Lazaro Leisure Park.

It was vintage Aguila as his feet as he applied the whip in rapid-fire style on the hot-blud (Indo) who went on his one-and-a-half length win over the Ongpincup Cup entry amid the thunderous roar of the huge crowd.

"Ang ibinide ko ang suggestion (My jockey spotted the wire)," said jubilant trainer Celing Singson, crediting the victorious Aguila's handling of the 3-year old dash bay colt owned by the Jaime Enterprises. "Magaling ang pagkakabata niya (His ride was magnificent)."

The victory worth .91 million, recalled Aguila's brilliant rides in 1983 when he ang-

MANALO: It's straight wins

Manalo joins main draw for RP Int'l Open 9-Ball

MANILA Manalo extended his marvelous winning run by crushing upset-conscious Jennifer Duenas, 7-2, to reach the main draw of the 5th Mondiz Battle of Champions Philippine International Open 9-Ball Championships at the Robinsons Galleria.

"I took the momentum and a great victories night," said Manalo of Filipino efforts clinching his undefeated streak to 11 matches.

Manalo ruled successive major tourna-ments in the United States recently.

Also gaining a spot in the main draw of the event co-organized by Point Sports and Solar Sports and sponsored by Mondiz, Cafe Fuse and Greenside Smooth were Pamela Ong, Jezabel Dela Amid, Imran Majid, Wenson Tanto, Emely Bille and Roberto Gaerlan.

Ong, feamed Sheng Ding-ping, 7-3; Amy Inez Kristenzie Sicapan, 7-6; Majid topped Tanadres Duenas, 7-2; Gaerlan crushed Dar Wei Fu, 7-3; Bille toppled Carlo Badio, 7-3; and Tanto trounced J. Prieto, 7-4.

Action in the Brendan event will be shown live on Solar Sports from 2 p.m.

Seeded in the same draw are "Bata" Reyes, "Django" Bumanawat and Alex Pagulayan, Americans Johnny Archer, Gabe Owen, Corey Deuel, Mickey Morris and Charlie Williams, Europeans Mike Immonen, Thorsten Hohmann, Nick Pafort, Ivan Dragan, Thierno Chanussi and Thomas Engert, Taiwan's Sang Ching-shun and Wu Chia-ching, Japan's Satoshi Tanoshun and Naohiko Takahashi and Korean Jeong Young Hwa.

PBA chair's dribblers put away Japa Cup

CHAIRMAN'S Office fold off ABC13, 74-62, yesterday to emerge champion in the annual Daily Japa Cup basketball tournament at the Ateneo Coliseum.

Eventual Most Valuable Player Rubash Ali scattered 22 points to lead the balanced attack of PBA chief Bobby Hananoulo's squad, which led by as many as 22 points.

Roman pro Dodoma Ito wound up with 23 points to lead the Antiquerdes.

The Charlie Ito-sponsored PBA Press Corps beat Commissioner's Office, 67-58, and snapped third place in the tourna-ment held in honor of the late founding president of the PBAPC and sponsored this year by ABC 5, San Miguel Corp., Cindy's Backhoe and Prescott's spring.

Is GMA less popular than the PBA?

BARE EYE

Ryccah Trinidad

from sports-loving friends.

• • •

They no longer bother to count game attendance in the PBA, fans say, because the crowds have stayed away.

In short, there are no heads to count.

In box-office lingo, they call this affection as boldness, or the fans going ticket-ingly sparse.

Seriously, does the PBA still bother to make a head count during games?

Well, maybe just, maybe not.

What's become clear is that the PBA has not been announcing attendance for close to a season.

It does not want to accept the truth about its growing unpopularity.

Who knows, the happy purpose of basketing not the size of attendance may soon be evident when the PBA enters its new championship phase of the season.

To this, we asked the owner set of friends which team they would have in clash in the forthcoming PBA Finals.

The unanimous reply: Search me.

Again, we could only look back to the happy, overflowing seasons when practically every PBAer's age has had his favorite team.

• • •

Yesterday, your reporter here again walked to the nearby fish market to feel the public pulse.

Which PBA team will fight it out in the finals, we asked a vendor who prides himself in being an avid sports fan.

Sorry, he said, you've got to tell me which team. Differ na alam.

This dealy guy with a sharp face, who used to be crazy about the ending numbers game that related to PBA game results, has 'himself' lost interest in what's going on in the PBA.

That's neither bothersome, the PBA is the only league of its kind that we've got.

But you know what? Further questioning during that walk through the line of post-dawn's stalls has led to a startling discovery. People in the streets are now more interested in the fate of the Pope, or the Obregon's affair.

Former fans of the President have been wondering, rather passionately, if Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo would face up to the truth and survive in office at the same time.

No, they are not posting a bet on the house.

But there's the growing perception that, sidetrue the dolorous Secretary Reyes' activities in the past, the President has become an unpopular, or even less admired, than poor, dilapidated PBA.

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
TV GUIDE
Monday, June 27, 2005

LIVE 8 ABC

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Serena suffers early exit

Craybas buries two-time champ in 'graveyard'

WIMBLEDON, England—Two-time champion Serena Williams lost at Wimbledon one round shy of another showdown with sister Venus.

Still sore following a layoff and shaken by an ankle injury, Serena was upset Saturday by fellow American Jennifer Capriati, 6-4, 7-6 (4).

Williams departed hours after her older sister advanced to the fourth round by beating Ioanna Kuznetsova, 7-5, 6-2. Venus will next play Czech Republic Nicole Vaidisova, who defeated Wimbledon with a career record of 7-23 in Grand Slam tournaments.

It was Williams' earliest elimination at a major event since the 1999 French Open.

"I've never been one to lose well," said Williams, who fought back tears and dabbed at her eyes during a postmatch news conference. "I'm just used to winning these kind of matches. It's hard for me to go out there and you can't make a shot—and you've been making them for years."

The match was scheduled as the last of the day on Center Court, but because other matches there ran long, Williams and Capriati were moved to Court 2—the "Graveyard of Champions." Past losers there have included Jennifer Capriati, Jimmy Connors, John McEnroe and seven-time champion Pete Sampras in the final round at Wimbledon. AP

COMPLETE WIMBLEDON SINGLES RESULTS

MEN—Second Round: Roger Federer (1) def. Nicolas Kiefer (12) 6-3, 6-4, 6-4; Andy Roddick (2) def. Ivo Karlovic, 6-4, 7-6 (5), 7-6 (4); Lleyton Hewitt (3) def. Jarkko Nieminen, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4; Tim Henman (4) def. Alexander Popp, 6-1, 7-6 (4), 6-2; Sebastien Grosjean (6) def. Nicolas Kiefer, 7-5, 6-4, 6-3; Nicolas Almagro def. Andy Roddick, 6-4, 6-7 (5), 6-7, 7-6 (5), 6-4; Mario Ancic (9) def. Mikhail Youzhny, 6-4, 6-4, 6-4; Richard Gasquet def. Mike Bryan, 7-6 (2), 6-3, 6-3; Guillermo Coria def. Jurgen Melzer, 7-6 (2), 6-3, 6-4; Mardy Fish def. Sebastien de Chaunac, 6-3, 6-4, 6-4; Robert Kendrick def. Mike Bryan, 6-7 (9), 7-6 (5), 6-4, 6-4.

WOMEN—Mary Pierce def. Ana Ivanovic, 6-7, 6-4, 9-7; Nadia Petrova def. Tatiana Golovin, 6-4, 6-3; Nicole Vaidisova def. Amelie Mauresmo, 6-4, 6-3; Maria Sharapova def. Katarina Srebotnik, 6-3, 6-4; Lindsay Davenport def. Dinara Safina, 6-3, 6-3; Venus Williams def. Daniela Hantuchova, 7-5, 6-2; Nathalie Dechy def. Elena Dementieva, 6-7, 6-3, 6-4; Elena Likhovtseva def. Paola Suarez, 6-2, 6-2; Anna Smashnova def. Emmanuelle Gagliardi, 6-3, 6-3; Jelena Jankovic def. Tatiana Perebiynis, 6-3, 6-3; Alicia Molik def. Gisela Dulko, 6-3, 6-3; Elena Bovina def. Daniela Bedanova, 6-3, 6-3; Alona Bondarenko def. Sesil Karatantcheva, 6-3, 6-2; Francesca Schiavone def. Tatiana Poutchek, 6-3, 6-3; Anastasia Myskina def. Jelena Kostanic Tosic, 6-3, 6-3; Amelie Mauresmo def. Jelena Jankovic, 6-4, 6-4; Venus Williams def. Ioanna Kuznetsova, 7-5, 6-2; Jennifer Capriati def. Serena Williams, 6-4, 7-6 (4).

Miñoza fires a 65, ties for 16th place

BAGUIO Int'l Stroke Play—Frankie Miñoza shot the round of the day with a six-under-par 65 Sunday and finished in a three-way tie for 16th in the inaugural Benguet Open.

The top Filipino statesman, who struggled in the second and third rounds of the par-71 Jack Nicklaus-designed Baguio Hotel and Country Club course, had seven birdies against one bogey in his stint of 32-34 and supposedly emerged the best 69 but with a 279 total.

With earlier rounds of 67-74-72, Miñoza teamed up 13 strokes behind Australian Jeff Hawkes, who earned more than enough for his long-delayed honeymoon with his wife-caddy Monique by rolling the event at 265 after a final round 67.

Miñoza and Monique got married last September but had to postpone their honeymoon while they campaigned in the Asian Tour.

Jovenar Jebulan rallied with a 69 and ended up in a five-way tie for 20th place at 275. Angelo Que also had a 69 for 283.

Gaurav Garg (72) and Jimmy Conde (72) finished at 284 while Cookie Lee (74) and Gerald Escalier (76) wound up at 286.

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US OPEN

'Soren-Slam' fades amid teen charge

CHERRY HILLS VILLAGE, Colorado—Two teenagers in pink shirts and ponytails showed Saturday that history at the US Women's Open doesn't have to be all about Annika Sorenstam and the Grand Slam.

Michelle Wie, a brute 16-year-old model of poise at Cherry Hills, was trying to prove no one of many tough spots on her way to a 1-over 73 while playing in the final group. She was tied for the lead with 17-year-old Morgan Pressel, who shot a 70 to get into the final group.

They were joined at 1-over 214 by Karen Stupples. One shot behind was 18-year-old Paula Creamer.

Filipina Jennifer Rosales shot a 73 for a 221 total that left her in a 5-way tie for 30th place, seven shots off the lead. Fil-Am Dorothy Delasin was four strokes back, after a 75 (226).

A victory by Wie or Pressel would make them the youngest to ever capture a major championship. Creamer would be the youngest to win a major in America. All of them are playing well enough to do it.

Sorenstam is still more than just a subplot to this dynamic championship, but just barely.

Her dream of sweeping the four majors appeared to crash with a three-putt bogey and a four-putt double bogey in a span of four holes early in the third round. But she salvaged a 2-over 73 to finish at 6-over 219, only five shots out of the lead heading into the final round. AP

UST, La Salle spikers seek crown berths

UNIVERSITY of Santo Tomas and La Salle try to avenge a showdown for the 2005 Shakey's V-League first conference crown when they take on separate rivals today in the consolation semifinal playdate before another repeat big crowd at the Rizal Memorial Coliseum.

The Tigresses, tied with the lady Archers for the final with 2-1 (win-loss) slates, appear to have the inside track for the first championship berth with a "fighter" assignment at 5 p.m. against the 0-3-rated son of Sir Sebastian Lady Stags.

In contrast, La Salle has a tough task against Ateneo in the 3 p.m. opener with the Lady Eagles expected to maximize all their strength and power in the all-important match that will be the defining moment of their five-win campaign here.

With a 2-1 record, Ateneo needs to win over La Salle to clinch the first or a finals slot.

A loss will cement a UST-La Salle title duel in the tournament sponsored by Shakey's Pizza.

The La Salle-Ateneo duel will be preceded at 7 tonight on BC-13 while the UST-EAC bouts will be aired tomorrow, also starting at 7 p.m., according to the organizing Sports Vision Management Group Inc.

Mayweather triumphs

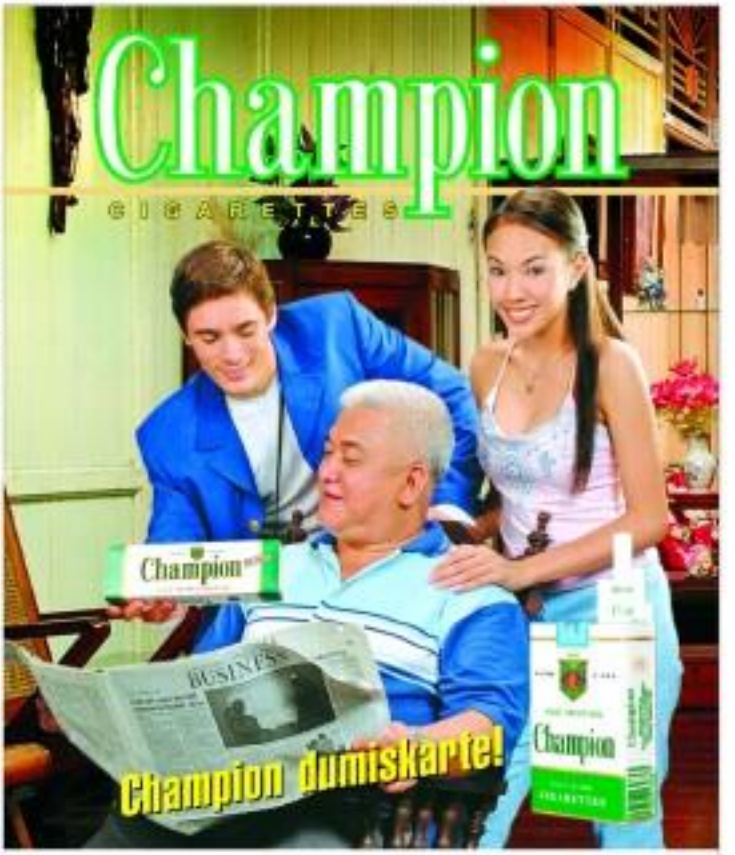
ATLANTIC CITY, N.J.—Floyd Mayweather Jr. exploited Arturo Gatti on the club fighter he said he was giving the boxoffice event boasting boxoffice night and taking the 140-pound title when Gatti's corner called it quits after six rounds.

Showing speed and power that Gatti had no answer for, Mayweather pounded Gatti with shots to the body and head for an eighth before a stunned stillseated crowd at Boardwalk Hall that had come to cheer on their local hero.

Mayweather, a heavy favorite entering the ring, remained undefeated and won his championship as many weight classes with the performance of his career. He was by unruled Gatti's punches and landed his own with crisp precision while Gatti's face swelled.

The end came after the ninth round, when Gatti was taking punish after punish in the body and the head while offering little response. When he walked back to his corner, he suggested he wanted the referee and barely made it back to his corner.

"I'm stopping it, baby. I'm stopping it," Gatti's trainer, Buddy McGirt, told his fighter, who protested only barely. "No more. No more. Your eyes are closing." AP



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The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Guaso

Ahmadinejad triumph worries West

TEHRAN—Triumphant hardliner Mahmoud Ahmadinejad faced Sunday international concern over Iran's future foreign policy and bitter recriminations from a beaten opponent after his crushing presidential election victory.

European leaders said Ahmadinejad, who takes office in August, would have to move quickly to prove that Iran's nuclear program was peaceful while the United States lambasted the election as shaming the Islamic republic and "out of step" with the trend of democracy in the region.

Veteran mayor Ahmadinejad, who trounced regime veteran Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani in Friday's second-round runoff with 61.69 percent of the vote, was to hold a news conference later Sunday to set out how he intends the country.

A self-proclaimed religious fundamentalist, Ahmadinejad promised he would "build up an exemplary, developed and powerful Islamic society" and called on Iran to unite after what has been a highly-divisive election.

Hashemi Rafsanjani was not going down quietly, repeating allegations of vote rigging that have marred both rounds of the election and also looking out at the hardline body that vets the polls in thinly veiled language.

"All the statutes of the regime were used to an organized and illegal way to direct votes in this election," he said, claiming that tens of thousands of civilians had been spent in a campaign to ensure him and his family.

Rafsanjani and two reformist candidates beaten in last week's first round had already accused each Ahmadinejad backer regime elements such as the Guardians Council, the final militia and Revolutionary Guards of rigging the poll.

The regime has insisted the election was proper while outgoing reformist President Mohammad Khatami said the results had to be respected.

Ahmadinejad's stunning victory could spell the end of Rafsanjani's political career after a quarter of a century at the center of the regime. He has recently been seen by the West as a moderating influence in talks on Iran's nuclear program.

Iran is currently engaged in delicate talks with European countries to provide guarantees to atomic energy program is not geared towards developing a weapon and Ahmadinejad's election swiftly triggered concerns over the future of the negotiations.

"I hope that under his presidency, Iran will take early steps to address international concerns about its nuclear program," British Foreign Secretary Jack Straw said in remarks echoed by his counterparts in France and the US.

Ahmadinejad's victory also dents the door, in the short term at least, to Iran reopening ties with arch-enemy, the United States, an idea cautiously floated by Rafsanjani during the election campaign. AFP

Suicide bomber using melons kills 5 in Iraq

BAGHDAD, Iraq — A suicide bomber who hid explosives beneath watermelons in the bed of a pickup truck slammed into a police headquarters in northern Iraq on Sunday, killing five people and wounding eight others, police and hospital officials said.

The explosion partially destroyed Sab al-Nisk police station in central Mosul, 360 km northwest of Baghdad.

The blast happened at about 6:30 a.m. in a busy shopping district that includes a market.

Policeman Mohammed Hussein Ali, 30, said he witnessed the attack in which a man who seemed to be driving watermelons to a market detonated his pickup truck just outside the security building.

"We didn't suspect him. Everyday we see such cars because we're near a market," Ali said.

All the roads were blocked at the time except for one that leads to the market, and the pickup truck was allowed to pass through a checkpoint, he said. The bomber detonated the pickup truck near a tent well adjacent to the station.

Four policemen and a civilian were killed in the blast, police Brig. Gen. Saeed al-Ghrairi said. The four were sleeping in a tent at the police headquarters and died when the roof collapsed on them, Ali said. The civilian victim was killed on the street outside.

The wounded included police and civilians, including the station's commander, Dr Baha al-Din al-Bakri and Ahmed.

Elsewhere Sunday, a mortar round exploded at a house in eastern Baghdad's Baladiyat neighborhood, killing a woman and two children, police Lt. Col. Fuad Ismail said. One child was wounded.

Separately, gunmen killed police Col. Riyad Abdul Karim at his apartment in eastern Baghdad's Mashtal neighborhood, police Lt. Col. Hassan Chalhoub said. Karim was assistant police director of emergency services in the capital's Rusafa district, which encompasses the eastern side of the Tigris River.

The Mosul attack came a day after a suicide bomber rushed by five cars loaded with armed insurgents slammed into a mall outside the home of an Iraqi special forces police officer in the Sunni triangle city of Samarra, killing at least nine people on the street, officials said.

In another attack in the same region, insurgents wounded up eight police officers at a checkpoint outside the western city of Ramadi, then searched them into their office and shot them to death, police said Saturday. The attack was on Friday. AP

China's oil thirst seen contributing to fuel price hikes

TAIPEI, China—China's thirst for oil is contributing to the high oil prices that threaten Europe's economic growth, European Commissioner for Economic and Financial Affairs Joaquin Almunia said Sunday.

Almunia said world oil prices, which closed Friday just short of the $60/barrel mark, were presenting upsy facing delegates to a meeting of Asian and European finance ministers in the northern city of Taipei.

"Even if they will be maintained at the present level of around $60 per barrel, of course they will have a negative impact on our growth rates," he said on the sidelines of the meeting.

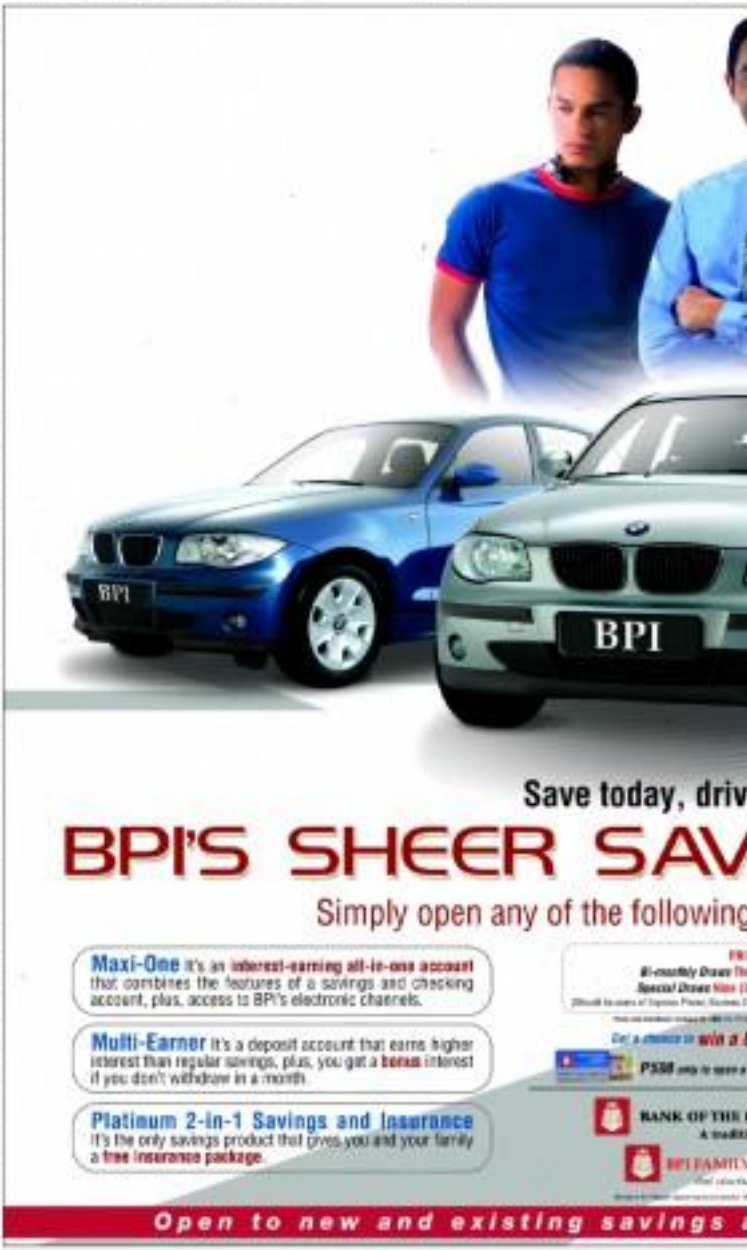
Almunia said prices were unlikely to fall in the near future, especially as China claims a growing share of the limited resources.

"It is clear that (it is) the Chinese demand for oil which can explain the situation of the market," he said.

China officially plays down its impact on the price of the commodity, pointing to low per capita usage rates compared to developed nations.

But its booming economy, which grew by 9.5 percent last year, is free on fuel and there are emerged shortcomings of infrastructure during peak periods.

The country plans to build up its strategic reserves of oil as a buffer against such shortfalls. AFP



Hope, despair in Asia 6 months after tsunami

BANDA, Sri Lanka—Six months after the devastating Dec. 26 earthquake and tsunami that killed 150,000 people in 11 countries and left millions homeless, Asia's worst natural disaster in modern history continues to haunt survivors, many of whom have yet to rebuild their homes and lives.

In India's worst-affected area of Nagapattinam, fishermen dyed Mumbai-bashed thrown clothes before a moment mapping planned by the tsunami-battered shore. The planet, named after the late President of K., is among 107 now planned in the memory of children who died at the spot. About 1,000 children from Nagapattinam planned a candlelight mass later in the day.

More than 11,000 people died in India and those of a new tsunami scientists, said Thattaramaya, the head of a local fishing cooperative in Nagapattinam.

"The reason is very rough, so people don't want to go. There was also a rumor that there could be another tsunami at 6 a.m. today," he said.

Thailand's southern tourist beaches that were sent flocking of foreign currents easily quiet Sunday with luggage still limited to the small, and powers for running visitors hanging on palm trees as grim reminders of what happened a full year ago.

In Indonesia, where people gathered in this conflict to remember the 131,000 people killed, signs of hope filled the grounds of the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque in the heart of hardest-hit Banda Aceh, as wedding parties took place throughout the provincial capital.

Clad in a green and gold silk outfit and an elaborate headdress, Wiwit Mardalan waited nervously for her groom to arrive for their traditional marriage ceremony.

"I realize today is the six-month anniversary of the tsunami so there it is sad memory. But this is also a happy day for us and a way we can encourage others to look to a better future," she said.

Before the tsunami, about 60,000 students came daily for Koranic teachings at the Grand Mosque, said teacher Muzia Wati. Only 200 students remain today, she said.

In Sri Lanka's rebel-controlled Mullaitivu district near the easternmost city of Batticaloa, volunteers continued removal debris by an earthen levee to mark the anniversary. School bags, books, shoes, sarongs, even television parts were carried by the waves were taken to the area's government schools.

Organizers said the exhibition would help survivors work through their suppressed pain.

"The point... is to bring out the psychological processes of the survivors who are still suffering inside," said Shanthi Sivaswaran of the British-based charity Oxfam. "We will have psycho-social workers at the centre to counsel them."

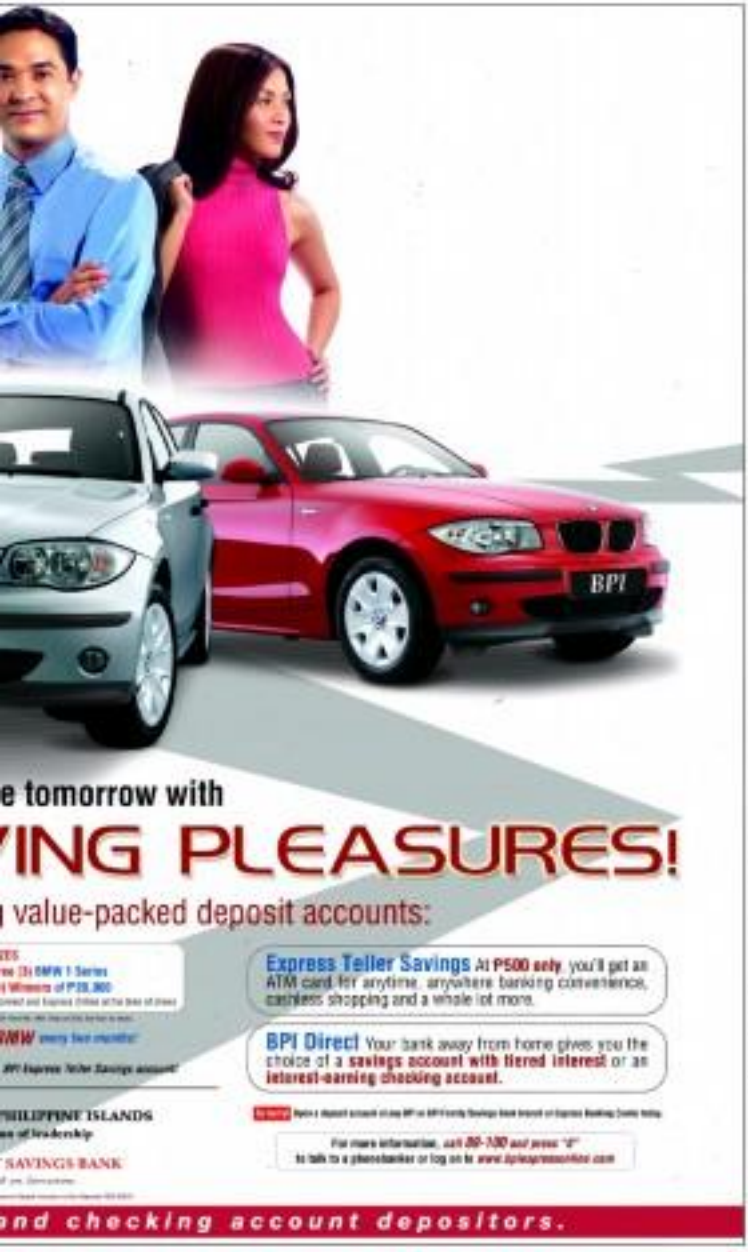
"The pair of shoes, my daughter liked most," read an inscription written next a shoe.

"We can be what we want to be," read another.

In Thailand's hardest-hit Khao Lak resort area—once crowded with tourists—only a few visitors could be found. Partly buried bags and clothes wrapped around driftwood littered the beach.

More than 5,300 people died and 2,800 were missing when the massive waves pummeled Thailand's southwestern coastline. Many of the victims were foreign travelers excursioning at beach resorts.

Hundreds died on the island of Phuket—the country's top tourist destination—where visitor attitudes have soared after the catastrophe. AP



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Tsunami may have spawned new disease, experts say

By Margie Mason

MANY who survived the killer tsunami swarm incubation being attacked by the sheer force, time marking in mouthfuls of salt-water mud and sand as they gasped for air and struggled to swim.

In several cases, dirty water taken into the lungs was likely polluted with bacteria that caused through the nervous system to the brain, causing paralysis in parts of the body, according to a report in the June 23 edition of The New England Journal of Medicine.

The condition has been dubbed "tsunami lung" by doctors who treated such patients following the Dec. 26 quake.

Researchers documented the case of a 17-year-old girl from Banda Aceh, the capital of Indonesia's Aceh province, the worst-hit area in the disaster. More than 130,000 dead and some 37,000 remain missing in Indonesia six months after the disaster.

The patient was diagnosed with pneumonia two weeks after being dragged about one kilometer (half a mile) from her home by the tsunami's waves. A week after that, the right side of her face became weak, along with her leg and arm on the same side, according to the report.

Her chest stopped sliding and had trouble swallowing. Her right arm and leg were limp.

Doctors placed the 15,000-Merci drained pleural fluid from her chest and gave her a series of drugs. The library is a 15-floor hospital ship that treated thousands of victims following the 9.0-magnitude earthquake and tsunami and rushed after an 8.7-magnitude earthquake three months later off the western coast of Sumatra's west Nias island.

The patient's family entered her bloodstream and caused her nervous system, resulting in brain abscesses, the report cited G. Cindy Dr. Stephen L. Person at surgery.

After aggressive therapy, the girl slowly regained movement in her face and limbs and was eventually able to stand and walk by herself.

Without the tsunami she would not have died there, it is almost certain that she would have died of complications of her traumatic-related amputation pneumonia," Person told The Associated Press.

He said the library team treated four cases of tsunami-related aspiration pneumonia, but he suspects many other may have developed the disease and died before help arrived.

He said it's impossible to know how widespread the disease actually was.

"Due to the scope of the disaster, it is hard to estimate a number of potential cases since the actual death toll has never even been accurately reported," Person said.

The library's doctors said patients were all children and young adults who recovered after treatment.

Malaysia to study whether it has too many holidays

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia will examine the number of public holidays in the country as civil servants prepare for the introduction of a five-day working week, a report said Sunday.

Deputy Prime Minister Najib Razak said the country's 14 holidays, in addition to the five-day week to start on July 1, were excessive and would make workers less competitive, the New Straits Times reported.

The government announced in May that it would cut down the five-and-a-half-day working week which includes Saturday mornings, saying that the move would increase family bonding and boost domestic tourism.

But Najib said the five-day week would not reduce workers' total hours, as civil servants would have to work longer hours each day.

More than 60 percent of Malaysia's population are Muslim Malays, while some 26 per cent are Chinese and eight percent are Indians.

The multiracial nation is credited in major religious and cultural occasions from each community being gazetted as holidays for the whole country. AFP

ISSN 0116-2442 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER Est. 1976 No. 999

OPINION

Text or post feedback (opinion or comment) to 2207 (Globe) or 333 (Smart)

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Where we stand

THREE full weeks after Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye waved copies of the "original" and "altered" tapes before the Malacañang Press Corps, the situation has only gotten worse for the President. By delaying her response to allegations that she had been caught instructing an election official to commit election fraud, she has helped turn a legal dilemma into a political crisis.

EDITORIAL

To be sure, in the first week of the scandal, the President may have had very little choice. Judging by Bunye's remarks and the particulars of the "original" version he presented, it seems likely that in the first few days of the controversy the Palace was still at a loss; it had not yet figured out the true extent of the wiretapping. Palace officials assumed President Macapagal-Arroyo was the principal object.

But by the time ex-NBI deputy director Samuel Ong surfaced—on Friday of the first week—to say he had the "mother of all tapes," the details of the alleged wiretapping had become much clearer to Malacañang. When Ong failed to attract public support the following weekend, while holed up in a church sanctuary on historic Ilaya, the President should have pressed her advantage. She should have spoken out.

The delay since then has only served to sharpen the public's appetite for the truth of the issue. It has allowed a million "Hello Garci" ringtones to bloat. It has also forced the President into a corner. By promising an "appropriate time" for speaking out, she inadvertently raised the bar of a satisfactory explanation to an impossible height.

Not least, by failing to speak on the issue, she has also drawn the so-called middle forces, her erstwhile allies, into the fray. A statement from the Ateneo de Manila community, for instance, does not mince words about the President's moral obligation to tell the truth. While the 200-plus signatories from the university where Ms Arroyo taught for many years recognize the possibility of "a calculated plot to discredit the government and destabilize the country," they also criticize the President for creating a climate of uncertainty.

"President Arroyo's continued silence on the matter serves only to fuel further speculation and uncertainty. Her refusal to respond to the most basic question of what is true or not about the tapes only lends credibility to the charges of fraud, further undermines her authority, and creates precisely the kind of unstable climate conducive to malicious conspiracies."

So this is where we stand, as the scandal heads into its fourth week. Four factors, in particular, bear close monitoring.

Will more people take to the streets? Mass protests have continued, but crucially, they have not yet simmered the middle forces. The Saturday march co-defense chief Fortunato Abat called and then cancelled is an accurate reflection of his drawing power and organizing skills. On the other hand, the protest actions organized by militants on the Left have drawn the usual thousands, but they have yet to enjoy the sympathy of the majority.

Will more members of the opposition unite around Sen. Panfilo Lacson? Last week, the former presidential candidate embraced the cause of election fraud (complete with yet another PowerPoint presentation on alleged election irregularities). But if even other opposition leaders question the propriety of a former and controversial police chief wearing the mantle of the late Pope John Paul II, public reception for his Bo Sin Ahtal Movement may be touch and go.

Will more political players call for snap elections? This is a transparent attempt to gain power for the opposition, and the public seems unsympathetic. If Vice President Noli de Castro's mandate is indeed tainted, then so should those of Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr. and other senators elected last year on the basis of essentially the same certificates of canvass. Support for the call could be an index of desperation, or a recognition by the opposition that it doesn't have the numbers for impeachment.

Will the President finally break her silence this week?

The answers to these four critical questions will determine whether the political crisis will deepen, or whether some form of resolution will soon take shape. Whatever the answers, the national interest remains the same: The crisis must be resolved through constitutional means.

Tonight's the night

AND I mean the origin of Kapihan: as Manila's special 10th anniversary dinner chair "Hello Garci." The show's real name is "10 Million Cups of Coffee Served and Still Serving," a very long title, so it was nicknamed "Hello Garci," for short. We, the Kapihan dons have served that many cups of coffee during the 28 years that the breakfast forum for newsmakers and newsmakers (it is the original Kapihan; all the others are imitations) was held in only one place, the world famous Manila Hotel, the hotel with a history and the best place to eat in the Philippines. That is why the Manila Hotel is the first major sponsor of the affair. The others are Smart, PLDT, Pagcor, Dole Pure Philippines and Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office.

Dinner chair Hello Garci, by the way, is not Angelo, you will just yourself in the face, and you will never forgive yourself if you do. Your friends will be talking about it for weeks and you cannot join in the conversation because you have no cute or witty yarn to spout and girls from real dates you're jealous.

You must be tired of all the fundraisers over the Climbs Cairo tapes and the jockey patrols, so enter a break and allow yourself to be entertained by celebrity stunts and native welfare happenstances and his friends, and be reminded by the Philippines' leading theatre talents, Gino Pilita Cortes, Nonoy Zuñiga, Marichu Vera, Joel Rodrigo, etc. I, I particularly love you will be singing in the signature song of the show long after you have left the hotel.

Also, you will be helping Senatong Pimentel, the spearhead of impeachable justices, prove that Speech 2 is living up to Speech 1. Pah, our own version of London's Hyde Park where anybody can speak out against the government and public officials without being stopped, arrested or prosecuted. When Napoleon Lim was in jail for the Vizconde Rape, when rallies against the administration were stopped by policemen will never happen again. Anybody can speak out at the Freedom Park... even husbands who cannot speak out at home against their wives.

* * *

The trouble with Congress is that it has too many lawyers who object on every legal technicality or point of order and draw the TV viewers into smart they are. The investigations of the controversial tapes has not moved an inch because, after three days, the congressmen are still debating whether or not the committee members should hear the tapes. The cassette is obviously dilatory, the same cassette used by administration legislators during the canvassing of the votes for president and vice president to prevent the opening of election returns. So why is the debate in the only tactic left to the guilty. That is why the people believe there was cheating in the last elections.

But a hearing conducted by the House is not a court trial where the rules of court are observed. The hearings are fact-finding investigations to help in the writing of legislation and must therefore be summary in nature because legislators supposedly do not have the time. Common sense, not legal technicalities, must prevail in a congressional investigation. How can the investigators make their conclusions intelligently if they have not heard the tapes?

SEE CBN slaves the dinner for the sixtieth in the investigations. If the hearings were not televised live (but it should still report on the hearings without the lengthy interviews), the House leadership would have proceeded faster because then the congressmen would no longer have an audience to show off to.

* * *

In the Fine place, is there still a need at this time for President Macapagal-Arroyo to say whether or not she is the "Ballsy" in the tapes? Or to determine the authenticity of the tapes? Even if she has not honestly said so, she has already admitted that she is the "Ma'am" there by her silence. Because common sense dictates that if that were not her voice, she would have immediately disowned it. But she cannot disown it because she knows in her voice and the tapes are authentic. But science cannot have voice because a voice analysis will reveal that she is lying...again.

The congressmen may argue and turn and have endlessly but the public has already made it its conclusion.

* * *

The President said she will not resign because she has a "mandate to rule." True that's precisely the trouble—she has none. She probably think she made the presidency her own. It's also her term. Unlimited legal experts say there was no constitutional reason for her to grab the presidency from Erap. How she was caught on tape planning an election problem. On the 7th September 1944, Harry Truman, before she is an illegitimate President, he what "mandate" is she talking about?

She is also like a broken record. Shooting the opposition for "destabilizing" her administration. But she is the one destabilizing herself by her silence on the tapes. While she is at some un-other things, she does not speak up on the topics. She should face the music squarely. She cannot run a country if she hides from problems. She cannot lead people if she cannot answer their questions. Be brave, be honest, be truthful and God will do the rest. Virtue is no news toward.

* * *

Besides, the President may be barking up the wrong tree. The joke around town is that the more behind, the destabilization may be a certain former president who wants to go back to Malacañang. When Erap was ousted, the talk goes, his ego was conveniently stroked to establish an edifice, but his former subordinates were very active in the case Erap movies. Now the guy is elevated again, and his former cronies are again very active in his electioneering.

GMA must be very careful about this. It is, Bravo!

Progress

A MONTH finds me then late you has been murdered by a network during an observation. There is prima facie evidence pointing to the fellow in the standing and there is an witness and there is the standing gun itself with the rich matic prints all over it. While grieving for the loss of her son, the mother meets heaven and earth to try to get justice for him. She calls at the police, she lambasts the media, she goes to the Senate. But it did not take to bring the rich man to the dock.

Now, will you be appalled by what the truth is is doing and does her efforts a waste of time? Will you say what's done is done, life goes on, all that expenditure of energy wasn't bring the dead back to life? Will you tell her to stop all that nonsense...she has better things to do, which is to tend to her husband and family who are still alive? Will you tell her she is condemned to live in fear for the rest of her waking hours in this hostile open for evidence?

Of course not. To even think that it is futile—one answer from the bottom line. But, that's exactly the response she found justice for her daughter, Maricris, who was gunned down by Glenn Trebanier Jr. and she succeeded in putting him in jail. Today is did not bring back the dead, but it brought order to the universe, putting it back to its rightful place. And when Mrs. Solomon brought us to find justice for her daughter, we all stood up and applauded. Sometimes a mother's grief and tenacity are just too much for any one to bear.

Today the citizens of this country find their sovereign will trampled to death by the cutting scissors of Malacañang. There is prima facie evidence that rigged the counting, and rigged is good. There is her capitulation even with Virgilio Vicho Garci? Guerrilleros and there are witnesses to show the election results have been doctored. While weighing arguments for the motion, the citizens are up in arms. Their sovereign will has been trampled and seek justice for the murder of their man Banta. Several right, which is their right to vote. They count the votes and determine the truthfulness of the last two months before the end of the term. They vote, they won't stop until they find justice for democracy.

Now, would you be appalled by what the citizens are doing and does their efforts a waste of time? Would

Mutating tapes

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cavanaugh

IT was a wise decision made by the administration Arroyo Cabinet, composed of Executive Secretary Johnny Ermita, Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima and Energy Secretary Rafael Lotilla, to hold in abeyance the full implementation of the bill on the value-added tax and the oil price hike. They said this measure will be studied some more in view of rigorous objections from both opposition and consumers. If the measure worsens, Congress might even be receptive to proposal that portions of the new VAT law be repealed. This shows the administration's sensitivity to the pulse of the people, especially in view of the instability of the current political atmosphere.

The fuel issue is hot potato, especially because fuel costs are expected to rise by almost P1/liter first if the VAT were implemented. This is more than enough to bring economic difficulties to the people. Fuel is used by the banks, industry and transport sector. Any increase in the price of fuel is used in popular transportation modes, with the VAT deferment, the pump price of oil will still rise at about 50 centavos per liter. Fuel-dependent industries will also feel the price effect and contribute to this. The additional cost will be relatively even to ordinary citizens.

Former President Cory Aquino exhorted the people to give President Macapagal-Arroyo the "maximum benefit of the doubt." And she called for "self-help" and more prayers in these trying times. The stars that Cory's supporters wish to steer have come after their step soon-searching, was most welcomed in Cebu.

Many people I've talked to share Cory's thinking, especially because at this time there are just too many bad things happening to the country, and everyone seems confused about them. As Bill Shakespeare, General Douglas MacArthur put it at the Roxas Inaugural, it's difficult to tell the original from the false tapes in the original sets of the Senate tapes, the Peping tapes, the Garcia-Ong tapes or the Bacani tapes? As Marcos put it, it seems everyone's using tape "mission tapes." From Cebu Rep. Gwen Garcia comes the latest tape, the Garcia-Ong tape. Of course, accused wives supposedly telling Commissioner Virgilio Garcillano to explain the

Silence and rage

KRIS-CROSSING MINDANAO

Antonio J. Montalvan II

CHED 100 mentality has a tradition of silence that has since permeated the institution. There are many instances that can be cited. For example, where the evening period, which lasts until dawn, is a period of "Great Silence" in their traditions; silence is essential to prayer and pain and is destined as a profound way of honoring God.

Then there is the more extreme side of silence—as the Hitlers devoted "interna"—the outer time when the Nazi party was in power. Silence was a crime committed by a fellow comrade, needless to say, the violation of the code can cost a stallion his life. This is one instance where silence is used as a tool for allowing crimes.

Non-participation is another way, silence is also practiced in everyday life, depending on the desire and interests of a certain group. Here is the so-called "silent treatment" that two persons or a state of indecision/feeling may resort to. In other instances, silence is broken when the differences are unveiled.

On the other hand, compliments are sometimes linked to silence in the adults in the household with a "shhh!" Shushes has no golden mentions, but it is another version. I have noticed mothers to adult manners may use delightful conversations breaking into adolescent laughters. But they make it a point never to laugh at other peoples' mistakes. They simply do not wish people behind their backs. And many mothers try to teach kids or brats, a typical does such with its misbehavior.

The dictum "less talk, less mistake" is another form of silence in the manner of self preservation, to another extreme, there may be the only "choice" available to people today is dropping. Dropping. Sociopolitical episode refer to the kind of silence as a "silicate of silence." This is the dictatorship, Cory's Reel (of Mar and Antonio Cuneta, as well as the Cebuano people themselves.

Osmeña said that, on the contrary, many Cebuanos, including himself, support the idea of four separate Cebu provinces. One reason for this huge support for Cebu's partitioning, he said, is that the island would get four separate internal revenue allotments (IRA) instead of one, as is the case at present. Under the Local Government Code, Osmeña said, each province is positively allowed P66 million. If Cebu province would be partitioned into four, then it would get P264 million more, an amount which could go to funding many more of the island's needs.

The problem of Cebu, says Osmeña, is that central Cebu—like "Imperial Manila"—monopolizes to get most of the funds, and the areas in the periphery of the province, including the islands of Bantayan, Camotes and Malapascua, suffer neglect. Osmeña notes that partitioning has worked well for a number of populous provinces, notably the Davao provinces. Before the Davao del Norte, it would not work well for Cebu province. He also noted that the two Cebu City representatives, who cleared the votes of Cebu City House Speaker Jose de Venecia III and Rep. Antonio Cuenco, is a loudness the province only. But this is something Cuenco and Del Mar would echo, namely debate with their colleagues.

At any rate, the partition of Cebu province will be able to decide on the issue for themselves in a referendum scheduled in January or February 2006. Expect the debate on partitioning Cebu to escalate from now until referendum.

I asked the former Cebuano senator, who can smell the escalation of CMO in the May 2004 election, the question in the minds of many political pundits: should the partition of Cebu province be contradictory and the country? Osmeña said she would survive. "If the pinoy bet cards right," adding that she hasn't done badly in the economic front.

For the record; on record

LETTERS

A heated verbal exchange, not a scolding

(Philippine Daily Inquirer, June 27, 2005)

Across the NATION

ROUNDUP

Trouble in Patrol 117

LUCENA CITY—The entire 70-man force of Patrol 117 is being investigated for alleged involvement with armed cattle rustling, according to reports of the provincial police. Senior Supt. Ricardo Ayroso, overall coordinator of Patrol 117 here, disclosed that of the 5,220 cattle reported to have been lost to rustlers in Quezon province in the last six months, 1,220 were stolen cattle, mostly made by youngsters. They lamented that previous tips and rumors, especially gasoline, had been received in attending to armed calls. Former 117 officials have been making the rounds of radio stations here to call on the citizens to become responsible partners in maintaining peace and order by not engaging the police here with irresponsible calls.
Dalle Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Village chief held

CABANATUAN, Guimba—Police arrested a village chief, who had three love mates, for firing an unlicensed firearm inside a cockpit in his home past midnight on Saturday. It report identified the suspect as Dionisio Orcillanes Jr., barangay chief of Balamabang Dalayap, Isabel quezon cadet Orcillanes and some friends were drinking inside the Barrio Grill Cockpit and Restaurant when the cockpit owner, a local police official, asked him to leave. Responding police learned the village chief had also fired his gun outside the cockpit before he was apprehended.
Dalle Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Old farmer arrested

LUCBAN CITY—Policemen in Pitogo town in Quezon arrested a 71-year-old farmer for allegedly operating an unlicensed gambling activity in his residence on Wednesday. A report said police conducted a test operation from concerned citizens after Pitogo Chief of Police Superintendent Rodolfo Salvacion Garcia, Pitogo town, who was there in a drinking session in a store with cops invited to be his guest. After the farmer was seen accepting bets of the gamblers, police discovered that the elderly man is operating illegal activities on games of game fowl. The accused was detained at the municipal jail.
Dalle Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau

Ordinance vs fake products

SUBIC, Zambales—Mayor Richard Paulino recently signed into ordinance a measure meant to be the town council that penalizes any persons who fail to register and execute a resort's permit before engaging in store selling. The ordinance was enacted in response to complaints of residents who had bought fake or low quality products. The provincial board of Honolulu approved the ordinance after the provincial legal office said the measure is allowed under the general welfare clause of the Local Government Code. Under the ordinance, the town will put up a random store of businesses are suspected to market fake cosmetics and other items and their company's profile and the nature of their products.
Jhanar Cadiz, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

3 hurt in blast

PACE, North Cotabato—Three persons were injured when an unidentified suspect hurled a grenade at a drug store near the public market here on Monday evening, police said Tuesday. SPO4 Rodolfo Rodriguez, PNP PNP investigator, identified the victims as Jomar Bornes, 27; Richard Odino, 22 and Rolfo Aguilar, 30, all residents of Barangay Poblacion. Rodriguez said Rick Odino, owner of the pharmacy, had received an extortion letter but instead of giving in to the demand, Odino reported the matter to the police.
Edwin Fernandez, PDI Mindanao Bureau

MILF working to free trader

SULTAN KUDARAT, Maguindanao—The Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) on Friday said it was working for the release of a Chinese-Filipino trader abducted by suspected members of the Pentagon gang in April.

Abdullah Jadjur, MILF political affairs chief, said they received information that Benny Co, owner of Jackfil Marketing in Cotabato City, was alive and in good health.

He did not provide information where Co was being kept.

"We are working for his freedom. We are certain that his captors will not execute him," Jadjur said.

Jadjur said Co's relatives (whom they have liked the military and the police not ignored the MILF's earlier information on his whereabouts.

"He was spotted in Barangay Inland in Datu Unsay, Maguindanao. But there was no response from the military or police. We cannot operate in the area if there is no coordination with authorities," Jadjur explained.

Co was kidnapped near his home on Roxas Avenue Street in Cotabato City on April 6.

His military and members of the Pentagon were behind the kidnapping.

The gang has been responsible for at least 36 kidnapping cases in Mindanao, including high-profile victims like Italian priest Giuseppe Pierantozzi in 2001.

In Zamboanga City, kidnappers of a Hong Kong Sphinxair member of Opus, Cam-Banga Islander have demanded P15 million in exchange for the victim's release.

Senior Supt. Edwin Salubid, operations chief of the Western Mindanao Command, said the demand was unjustified the family of the victim, Erick Santamaria.

Santamaria, 18, was abducted with her boyfriend, Jaipul Rana, while they were on their way to Barangay Sibil, also in Basilan, on June 19.

Rana escaped on the night of the abduction and reported the incident to the police, which mounted a search and rescue operation. And
Joy Madrona and Julie Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Prosecutors in Esperat case replaced

CEBU CITY—Senior Assistant State Prosecutor Raul Gonzalez on Saturday confirmed the relief of prosecutors handling the murder case of community journalist Marlene Esperat.

Rachel Yusad Nicolas said he has been designated officer-in-charge of the Prosecutor's Office in Tacurong City.

Nicolas said he was also ordered to reinvestigate the case after the prime suspects, Dennilo Montañer and Estrella Salleg, through their legal counsels, asked the Department of Justice to review the charges filed against them.

Mr and Montañer, Station officer of the Department of Agriculture in Koronadal, and Salleg, legal researcher, complained that they were deprived of due process during the preliminary investigation.

Esperat, a former Ombudsman who turned to journalism to fight government corruption, was shot dead on Kennedy Thursday.

Before her death, she filed charges against several opposition officials including Montañer and Salleg.

Nena Santos, known for the influential family and some "unseen hands" in the DOJ were using legal maneuverings to muddle if not derail the case.

Santos said Nicolas, a government prosecutor based in Cotabato City, could never be impartial because he previously represented Montañer in a libel case he filed against Esperat.

The libel case has been dismissed, but Santos said Nicolas still is known to suspected.

Antonia Rose to Manila on Saturday to file her opposition to Nicolas's reinvestigation of the murder case.

She said Nicolas should have asked for a leave from the court before conducting a reinvestigation.
Agnes Zenaida, PDI Mindanao Bureau

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Village execs accused of slay

MATANOG CITY—A village official and three others were arrested of killing a farmer whose head was cut off, chopped and placed in a sack and whose body was thrown out of a cliff in Datu Saudan Benzaliun town.

Cotoc Sarusa, a deputized of Barangay Kabuntalo, Datu Akmad, Stellen Mikan and Bobo Bakcon were detained pending the filing of murder charges for the killing of Danilo Cabon Dagohoy, 40, also of Kabuntalo.

Police claimed the suspects tortured and killed Dagohoy on Wednesday. Carlo Antinit, PDI Western Bureau

NBDB Clarification

NBDB has never received a formal complaint against any book of Phoenix Publishing House. Last February, Phoenix voluntarily submitted three (3) books to the NBDB Textbook Review Service: ***Harnessing English Arts Today*** **(Grade 5),** ***Exploring Life through World Literature*** **(4th year) and** ***Simply Science in the Next Century*** **(Grade 3).** The Ateneo English Department found the Grade 5 & 4th year English books "generally commendable" in which "minor improvements" are needed. UP-NISMED found quality of the Science book "poor" because its "language and cognitive level are way above that of Grade 3, ideas are poorly organized, BEC competencies are not sufficiently discussed," etc. NBDB has recommended to Phoenix to stop selling the Grade 3 Science book and radically revise it. There is proper forum for determining textbook quality.

National Book Development Board

Education execs in ARMM face plunder charges, says DOJ official

COTABATO CITY—Education officials in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, who were responsible for the unremitted share of about a billion pesos in government insurance premiums of the region's workers could be charged with plunder, according to Justice Undersecretary Alberto Agra Lantin.

Lantin heads a five-member team that is reviewing records of the Government Service Insurance System's branch here.

Teachers in the ARMM have complained about their failure to obtain loans and access other benefits from the GSIS. They later found that the Department of Education in the region did not remit their premiums from 1997 to 2003.

Earlier figures released by the GSIS showed that the non-remitted premiums, including surcharges, amounted to P900.7 million.

Lantin said that under the law the amount of money involved was more than enough for the government to initiate the filing of plunder charges against those involved in the fund mess.

"A mere delay of payment is already a crime. How much more for the non-remittance of workers' contributions to the GSIS," he said.

ARMM Gov. Parouk Hussin, who also sits as regional education secretary said previous DepEd regional officials should be blamed for the mess. He declined to name them.

The problem had been existing when he assumed office, he said.

Hussin assumed the post when former DepEd Secretary and then Gov. Mujiv Hataman ran for governor in Lanao del Sur in 2004. Jaydee Hamoy, Phil Muslimin Review

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Ifugao micro-hydro projects to be replicated in Ecija farming towns

By Desiree Caluza
PDI Northern Luzon Bureau

KIANGAN, Ifugao—"The province's noteworthy but micro-hydro power projects will be replicated in Nueva Ecija and Nueva Vizcaya as energy-farming communities there.

The establishment of the micro-hydro plants in the two provinces will provide electricity to the farming villages of Minuli and Capintalan in Carranglan, Nueva Ecija, and some villages in Sta. Fe, Nueva Vizcaya, said Hadrian Corvera, spokesperson of the Isla Black and Asian Network of the Philippine Rural Reconstruction Movement here.

"This has no impact on the environment, you will just use water to make the turbine rotate, so it will not cause pollutants," Corvera said.

Ifugao first used a micro-hydro plant built by the province's farmers at Barangay Subi in Hingyon town in 1990.

The Ifugao micro-hydro plant has been hailed as an investor-host sustainable energy scheme.

Corvera said the technology is a "hidden garden" project that has to be developed for long-term use.

"The micro-hydro project has to be developed to make it work more efficiently. It can light up households, but we have a long-term vision, we hope that the micro-hydro plant can generate more power to provide enough power to industries like rice mills," Corvera said.

He said they made the technology in Nueva Ecija and Nueva Vizcaya because some villages in these areas have yet to be energized.

Putting up power lines to connect these villages to the national grid is more expensive than adopting the Ifugao energy scheme that taps water flowing in three places, he said.

Ifugao villagers call another module of the micro-hydro plant *binakonan* or firefly. The *binakonan* is used to charge 12-volt batteries to power light bulbs in 20 households.

Corvera said compared to Ifugao, the farming villages in Nueva Ecija and Nueva Vizcaya would need a larger volume of power to supply at least 50 households.

The micro-hydro plant works like a large fan without the pollution.

Like a large fan, the micro-hydro power plant has water and turbine, Corvera said. The force of water makes the turbine work to produce electricity.

Jarque cleared of attempted murder charge after 13 years

By Carla P. Gomez
PDI Pinglot Bureau

BASUD, CAMARINES NORTE—After almost 13 years, the Sandiganbayan has dismissed the last of the six cases that Cirse awaited Rep. Gen. Raymundo Jarque Jr. (a non-communist rebels) about 18 years ago.

The anti-graft court on Tuesday cleared Jarque and 16 Ll. Arthur Tupaz of attempted murder for lack of evidence.

Sandiganbayan Associate Justice Rodolfo Ponolibo ordered the release of the cash bonds the accused posted and the recall of the hold-departure order issued by the court on Feb. 23, 1993.

The complainants, Danilo Magpantay and Enrique Manlapaz, accused Jarque of issuing orders to shoot and kill them on Sept. 2, 1991 in Barangay Pasol, Valladolid town.

They claimed that Jarque and Tupaz got mad at them because of their association with Magdalena Peña, a businessman who filed cases of graft, robbery and chess counts of qualified theft against the military officers. The cases were dismissed by the Supreme Court in 2004.

Peña filed the cases when Jarque, then head of the Army's Negros Island Command (Nicom), his men and Philippine Constabulary-Criminal Investigation Service (PC-CIS) personnel imprisoned a water seller, wrongfully Peña's brother in administrator to their grandmother's properties.

The cases prompted Jarque to join the New People's Army on Oct. 10, 1991. He expressed doubts that he would get justice from the courts.

With the dismissal of all six cases, Jarque said he and his family were happy that their family name has been vindicated.

He said the cases filed by Peña thereupon his military career that spanned 33 years as he filed to the hills in search for justice.

Still, Jarque said he would not let Peña escape for the damage inflicted on them. He said his lawyers would study the possibility of filing a damage suit against the businessman.

"We will give back as him what he has done to us," he said.

Tupaz, Jarque's aide-de-camp when he was the provincial police chief in 1990-91, said he only learned of the dismissal of all the cases on Sunday and wondered why the decision took so long to be promulgated.

The cases stemmed from the dispute between Magdalena and his brother Bonifacio over their grandmother's property.

Bonifacio used to manage the properties and businesses of their grandmother Soledad Morrillo and was then in possession of her residential house in Pollopondan town.

But on April 3, 1990, Morrillo executed a Special Power of Attorney, appointing Magdalena as his attorney-in-fact and giving him the powers to supervise, control and manage her properties.

Morrillo is was eventually ejected from Morrillo's house when Magdalena took over.

When Bonifacio threatened to evict Magdalena from the house, the latter filed a petition for injunction before a court in Iriga City.

The court denied Magdalena's petition and reinstated Bonifacio as administrator to Morrillo's properties.

Jarque's men issued the PC-CIS in implementing the court order but they ended up being charged in court.

Peña filed robbery, graft and qualified theft charges against Jarque and his men—Tupaz and Major Agustin Pilcher and Benjamin Macabua.

Also charged were Capt. Ramón de Joya and Sergeant Leopoldo Macli, Alexander Gonzales, Eduardo Ilano, Abraham Ilan and Manuelo Bernal of the PC-CIS.

Included in the cases were Basud Pulupandan Mayor Antonio Sarmiento, the businessman's brother-in-law Lorenzo Allan Tamores and PC-CIS civilian agents Eduardo Mojo, Nelson Alvarez, Jesse Chavella, Manuel Natapilan Jr., Rodolfo Tolentino and Benning Jovenco.

The Sandiganbayan acquitted the respondents on Jan. 20, 2004 for lack of evidence, prompting Magdalena to elevate his case to the Supreme Court.

The high tribunal, in a decision dated Dec. 17, 2004, upheld the Sandiganbayan's ruling.

Calapan mayor suspended

CITY OF CALAPAN—The Office of the Ombudsman has suspended Calapan Mayor Carlos Bonoan for two months as it acted on a complaint of grave misconduct and conduct unbecoming of a public official filed by a citizen.

The order was served by the Department of the Interior and Local Government on Tuesday.

Rufino Gozum, DILG provincial director, was assigned by presidential legal officer Lorybelle Tinjug to serving the order, an instruction of Usec Ariam Pangilinan.

City counsel Dante Mones, however, showed the mayor a letter from the mayor stating that he would recognize the suspension only after his motion for reconsideration was acted on.

"Is there a double standard here?" Mones asked, citing earlier cases of other officials in the province whose motions for reconsideration were first cleared before serving the Ombudsman's order.

The mayors said they were just following orders.

"Si Ombudsman's order! says, 'Susubilitan ang aking mga opisina at pirmiso' and thus, immediately executory," Tinjug said. "We will ensure him if ordered so if there's a TRO (temporary restraining order) from the Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court," the provincial lawyer said.

Since the mayor was absent, the service decided to post the order on his door and on the bulletin board.

A criminal case of child abuse was also filed by a student leader of the Jose J. Leido Jr. Memorial National High School against Bonoan, accusing policemen obtained by the letters.

Vice Mayor Robert Pinto is now the acting mayor. Mindoro Newsbi, PIN Southern Luzon Bureau

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Rosales to become RP's new prince of Church, says Cruz

From page A1

If made a cardinal, Rosales would be part of the elite College of Cardinals which chooses the Pope.

Sets of thousands of mourners are expected to attend the funeral of Sto el the Manila Cathedral before noon tomorrow.

The funeral for, reputedly the most prominent and important Filipino clergyman since the Spanish period, will gather top government officials headed by President Macapagal-Arroyo, whom he helped become office in 2001.

Former Presidents Corazon Aquino and Fidel Ramos, key players in the 'first Edsa Revolution spearheaded by the late prelate, are also expected to attend, together with Vice President Noli de Castro, Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. and Senate President Franklin Drilon.

At least five foreign cardinals close to Vilo—Oscar of Los Angeles, Indonesia, Taiwan, South Korea and Tokyo—would attend the funeral, said Arsenio.

According to Sarmo, "governors down to the last mayor" in the provinces of Bulacan, Cagayan and Iloilo will join the final sendoff for their beloved prelate. His sons a son of New Washington, Aklan, and former bishop of Jaro, Iloilo.

Catholic schools in and around Metro Manila will also send delegations. They will first gather at Rizal Park before marching to the cathedral before the 9 a.m. funeral march, Sarmo said.

The Manila Archdiocesan Parochial Schools Association alone has at least 35 schools under it wing. Schools like the University of Santo Tomas and Ateneo de Manila University belonging to the Catholic Educators Association of the Philippines will also send massive contingents.

"Definitely there'll be a huge turnout [of mourners]," Arsenio told reporters yesterday.

The Department of Public Works and Highways, Philippine National Police, Metropolitan Manila Development Authority, Intramuros Administration and the Manila city government had all been tapped to manage the crowd, the priest said.

Police authorities created a task force to secure foreign dignitaries, politicians and the ordinary folk expected to pay their last respects to the well-loved cardinal.

"We're ready for the burial," said Director Edid Quezol, chief of the Narcotics Capital Region Police Office. He had assigned some 200 policemen to the task force, which he named "Task Force Ascension."

Quezol is set to meet with Church official Ojeda today to discuss final details of the burial.

Besides securing visitors, policemen will see to the flow of traffic around the cathedral. Its demonstration will be allowed near the cathedral.

Yesterday, mourners waited an average of 15 minutes for their turn to stand in front of Sto's mahogany casket, saying in the long queue that extended all the way to Plaza Roma outside the cathedral.

Though the number of people could hardly rival that which queued for opposition leader Fernando Poe Jr. or former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., more mourners were expected in coming days for period Undas Mass at 7 tonight.

However, the Mass will be strictly for an intimate few, namely, Sto's relatives and former staff members at the Archdiocese of Manila and his Villa San Miguel residence in Mandaluyong, said Nearby Sarmoun, the Sto's communications director.

After the 7 p.m. Mass, Sarmoun said the cathedral would again be open to the public but only until 2 a.m. Sarmoun said he organizers would finish the funeral preparations

The church will reopen at 6 a.m. in time for the funeral march there hours later.

A home-drawn carriage will carry Sto's coffin around Plaza Roma to allow mourners outside the cathedral a final glimpse of his remains.

Think of the steps of Sto cathedral, the Pentagon will provide over many honors for Sto, it will be highlighted by "three salutes of the" a full 21-gun salute...the first time in Philippine history that such an honor will be accorded a clergyman, Sarmoun said.

The President will then hand over the Philippine flag that had draped Sto's casket to his younger brother, Dr. Ramon Sto, Sarmoun said.

Video walls

From the cathedral entrance, the coffin will be brought back to the front of the altar for the requiem Mass which will be concelebrated by Manila Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales with around 100 bishops and priests.

Bishop Antonio Tobias, Sto's long-time protégé, will deliver the homily.

At least two huge video walls will be erected outside the cathedral to allow people to view the Mass inside, Sarmoun said. He added those who would not be able to attend the funeral could offer prayers.

"Let us pray for the eternal repose of the cardinal," he said.

"But more than prayers and homily, I think the best way we can pay tribute to the cardinal is to continue his mission of promoting and defending the truth and really cultivating this deep faith in God in the hearts of every Filipino," Sarmoun added.

After the final Mass, Sto's former staff at Villa San Miguel will carry and lower his casket into its spot in the crypt beneath the cathedral.

Sarmoun said only 50 people, including the Apostolic Nuncio Antonio Franco and other top Catholic leaders, would be allowed in the crypt.

In his final resting place, Sto will take with him the symbols of his bishopric and cardinalate, including a wine cup-cum-containing his illustrious religious life.

Int'l groups ...

From page A1

Asia Program Coordinator of the New York-based Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ), said in a news conference.

Wright, along with Betty Mamiyo, executive director of the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (Seapa), and Lily Mendoza, executive editor of The Standard of Hong Kong, recently concluded a week-long research tour around the country. The delegation met with the families of the victims, journalists, media executives, police and justice officials, and local government representatives.

Wright said the government's definition of "solved cases was misleading, that justice had not been served in the vast majority of cases and that journalists in remote provinces remained vulnerable to threats and attacks."

Alampay said: "The police definition of 'solved' is the identification of the suspects and they are ready to file cases. There are no actual arrests and identification of the masterminds. It's still a long way off from bringing people to justice and actually putting them behind bars. Of all the cases the government has investigated so far, only a handful has come close to true resolution."

According to the ministry, nothing less than the conviction of killers and the actual masterminds behind the murders should indicate the government's success in the campaign against violence against journalists.

Wright also said another problem was "impunity," pointing to the huge backlog of cases before trial courts.

Culture of warlordism

She said the government should have the political will to address the "culture of warlordism" and the "culture of impunity," especially in the rural areas where journalists are most vulnerable.

"In half of the cases, mayors and local government officials were mentioned as masterminds, and police officials were actually listed as suspects in the crimes," Wright said.

The mission also urged the media to continue focusing on the issue, following up investigations into the murders in order to compel the police and courts to expedite the prosecution of cases.

Alampay also stressed that the joint mission went to the Philippines to focus international attention on the perils journalists faced in the country—described as the "most perilous" for journalists. Since the ouster of the dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986, the lacunose tally of murdered journalists stood at 93.

Alampay also said it was "refreshing and inspiring" that journalists and media executives the mission spoke to had acknowledged that addressing ethical issues, the need for reforms, and restoring industry standards were also solutions to the problems.

"Journalists are taking a hard look at themselves now. The question to the government is what about you?" Alampay said, adding that the bottom line was no one had the right to take someone else's life.

He thumbed down the gun waiving sentences for journalists sponsored by government officials and the police.

"It's basically a rap on. They give you the gun and wish you good luck when it is their job to protect you," Alampay said.

SUERTRES 0 0 0
(Tuesday's results)
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METRO
Editor Esther G. Dipasupil

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
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Only 20 percent of PUVs can raise fa

By Clarissa S. Bedro

MORE than 80 percent of the 60,000 jeepneys and non-aircon-ditioned buses in Metro Manila have not acquired fare increase from the Land Transportation Franchising and Regulatory Board (LTFRB) and should not yet be collecting the new fare hike, the agency's top official said.

LTFRB Chair Maria Elena Bautista again stressed that without a fare matrix or "taripa," jeeps and buses could not increase their fares.

Bautista said that as of last Saturday, only 25.6 percent, or 15,580, of jeeps and buses had paid their dues with the LTFRB. Of that number, only 12.3 percent, or 7,300, had received their fare matrices.

An operator has to pay P530 to filing fee, P10 as legal research fee, and P40 as franchise verification fee, after which they are matched to one fare fare matrix.

An extra fare matrix costs P50.

Operators who have paid their dues but have not gotten their fare matrix should start getting their copies today and the 27-FEB.

The matrices will be delivered for free by the LTFRB.

Bautista said the LTFRB would no longer release paid fare matrices at their office to prevent long queues and robbery threats.

Every time fares rise, fraud make a killing by charging as much as P1,000, she explained.

Operators who changed their odometers without informing the LTFRB would be fined P500 and are directed to file the changes in detail with the fraud in or before Aug. 27, said Bautista.

Only those who would not receive the matrix on the date specified would be entertained by the LTFRB. They must bring a copy of the original decision and the original official receipt," she noted.

If the franchise was bought from another operator, one must also bring the deed of sale, permission for sale and transfer, and the notice of hearing.

Meanwhile, Bautista said her agency received around 100 complaints against jeepney drivers charging higher fares even with the fare matrix.

However, she said the complaints had dwindled and no operators reinforced over the weekend remained in the apprehension of only two fare matrix violators.

The reports gathered by the Inquirer showed fare matrix violations taking place along the PNR-Manonda route and the Roxas boulevard-Highway route in San Pedro, Laguna.

In some instances, the jeeps displayed photocopies of the fare matrix, which according to LTFRB rules is a violation.

An original fare matrix is printed on yellow paper and has a holographic sticker under the signature of the issuing officer.

Business losses lead to alleged suicide pact

By Edson C. Tandoc Jr.

BAD BUSINESS reportedly led a trader and his lover to a suicide pact inside a motel in Mandaluyong City yesterday.

But while the woman, Milagros Guerrero, died, businessman Danilo Tolentino survived.

According to police, Tolentino and Guerrero, who were both in their early 50s, checked in a room at the Avenida Hotel and Restaurant in Mandaluyong City the other afternoon.

Yesterday morning, hotel employees phoned the room for the 8 a.m. wake-up call but nobody responded.

When hotel employees forced open the door, they found Guerrero lying on the floor while Tolentino was on the bed. Both were naked and bloodied.

PO3 Robert Esguerra said the hotel employees also found that Guerrero was already lifeless when responding lawmen arrived. However, they saw that Tolentino was still breathing and rushed him to the hospital.

Police recovered two kitchen knives, with blood still dripping from their blades, inside the room.

Guerrero had stab wounds in her neck and belly, while Tolentino had neck wounds in his neck and chest.

At the Mandaluyong City Medical Center, Tolentino told police that he and Guerrero had decided to end their lives.

Tolentino, who has been separated from his wife for more than a decade, had been depressed, according to relative Jesse Sison.

"His businesses are going bankrupt," Sison said.

After working as a manager for a tob cloth company, Tolentino put up his own grocery store and sight cloth, Sison added.

The other afternoon, Tolentino sent text messages to his children "talking for forgiveness."

His children got worried, but Tolentino did not respond to their text messages.

Esguerra said Tolentino's phone had about 30 unread messages when police recovered it.

Majority fail police exams

By Tarra V. Quismundo

TONIGHT scores or more such applicants?

The National Police Commission (Napolcom) has announced that 15,418, or 85.44 percent, of the 18,046 applicants for the police force this year have failed the test.

Similarly, 11,332, or 86.67 percent, of 10,676 policemen who took qualification exams this year for their promotions were also unsuccessful.

In all, out of the 36,722 who took Napolcom exams in the first half of 2005, only 8,974, or 27 percent, passed. The majority of 26,748, or 73 percent, failed.

Harder

Napolcom said the high failing rate was a result of the harder exams they were giving.

"The reason one is because it's confusing if eligible to enter the police service, and to see if those already in the service deserve to be promoted," said Napolcom Information Office chief Josephson Gil.

This year's passing rate is the lowest since 1995, when only 10.7 percent of examinees passed the eligibility and promotion exams given that year.

But instead of lamenting the poor results, Napolcom said the low passing rate is an improvement of PNP recruitments, as the commission and the PNP took reward implementing the PNP Reform and Reorganization Act.

Cleansing

This law, ratified in 1998, is aimed at cleansing the PNP of unworthy members to improve police service.

"The relatively low passing rate in both exams only be attributed to the Commission's continuous upgrading of examinees to produce examinees, in line with its national effort to professionalize the PNP," Napolcom Chairman Angelo Reyes said in a statement.

Out of 28,004 who taken for the Police Officer 1 (rank), 2,028 or 14.16 percent made the cut. A total of 7,346 officers, or 38.55 percent, passed the promotional test out of the 18,059 examinees.

Of those qualified for promotion, 31 passed the test to move up to the rank of Superintendent, 134 for inspectors, 2,904 for Senior Police Officers, and 4,217 for Police Officers.

The tests were administered on April 24 in Metro Manila and nine provinces.

The Napolcom maintains examination qualifies a civilian for application to the PNP.

Persons would soon pursue their application before regional or district police office, where they would be subjected to another round of testing, including a physical agility test, neuropsychiatric and medical examinations, and another written examination, said Gil.

Each examinee would get three individual rating reports through mail. Napolcom's Makati headquarters and regional offices would be answering exam result queries starting July 1.

NEW DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT

EDWIN JOSEPH
LIBOR

VOTE OF CONFIDENCE FOR GMA GOVERNMENT
THRU A REFERENDUM

THE NEW DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT HEREBY SUBMITS FOR A REFERENDUM THE GMA GOVERNMENT AS THE SOLUTION TO THE WORSENING POLITICAL CRISIS BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE ALLEGED ILLEGITIMATE TAPES WHICH PROVIDE EVIDENCE OF DIRECT INVOLVEMENT OF THE PRESIDENT IN CHEATING DURING THE 2004 ELECTIONS.

THE NDM DEMOCRACY MOVEMENT WISH THE PRESIDENT ANY FURTHER HARM. IT STANDS THAT A SPECIAL LAW FOR A NON-BINDING TWO PERSONS JOINT A CODE OF CONDUCT AND RESOLUTION SHOULD BE PASSED BY CONGRESS AT THE EARLIEST POSSIBLE TIME TO PRESENT A POSSIBLE BLOOD PEOPLE POWER UPRISING. THAT IS THAT BOTH OF THE PRESIDENT AND HER VICE PRESIDENT TO RESIGN TO SAVE THE NEXT FOR SPECIAL ELECTIONS UNDER ART. VII, § 10(3) OF THE 1987 CONSTITUTION. IN SOME OTHER RELATED EVENTS WHICH COULD SPELL THE KEY FOR THE RESIGNATION OF THE TWO IN BOTH CASES AND THE RULE OF THE SUCCESSION. SHOULD BOTH OF WE ARE TO SUCCEED, AS A CRUCIAL NECESSITY OF AN IMPORTABLE PLACE IN THE CONSTITUTION OF NATIONS." AS AN EXTRA STEP KNOWN UNDER THE DEMOCRATIC GOVERNING OF THE HEADS OF ALL INTERESTED PARTIES AND ORGANIZATIONS TO MEET AND LOOK OVER THE RESOLUTION BILL TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE CONGRESS OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES.

THE REFERENDUM BILL WILL ASK THE QUESTION:

DO YOU STILL HAVE CONFIDENCE IN THE ADMINISTRATION OF PRES. GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO AND VICE PRESIDENT NOLI DE CASTRO?

A YES VOTE WILL MEANING THE SUCCESS OF THE GOVERNMENT AS WELL AS THE RIGHT TO ELECT THEIR LEADERS FOLLOWING FAIR CREDIBLE MEANS TO BE IN REAL PEACEFUL AND ORDERLY ALL THE LONGSTANDING DEBTS AND ALLEGATIONS OF CHEATING IN THE LAST ELECTIONS. A NO VOTE OR A NO CONFIDENCE VOTE ON THE OTHER HAND, MEANS A RESIGNATION OF THE LEADERSHIP AND CALLS IN THE PRESIDENT AND HER VICE PRESIDENT TO RESIGN AND VACATE THE SEAT FOR A SPECIAL ELECTION FOR PRESIDENT AND VICE PRESIDENT.

MONDAY, JUNE 27, 2005

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER

B/S 1

BUSINESS

E-mail us at business@inquirer.com.ph
Website: www.inquirer.com.ph

Editor Raoul C. Marcelo
Assistant Editor Gloria S. Navarro

Ailing Makati Med looks to MVP for cure

By Cleofas S. Butiong

THE MAKATI Medical Center, once the country's premier hospital, is financially bleeding.

Insider sources said that Makati Med was now in dire financial straits allegedly due to mismanagement.

They said the hospital's books were in disarray, with huge receivables that have remained uncollected and several expensive yet idle medical equipment.

Makati Med's financial woes have reached a point that even staff and the nurses said that many employees have unpaid salaries.

In its search for a cure to its financial maladies, Makati Med has set its sight on veteran businessman Manuel V. Pangilinan.

Insider sources said the hospital, controlled by the Ayala and Ayalala families, had invited Pangilinan, popularly known in the business community as MVP, to join its board of directors and eventually become totally asked to infuse money into the company.

Pangilinan, chair of Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co. and managing head of Hong Kong-based First Pacific Ltd., had successfully turned around a number of financially troubled companies, among them PLDT and subsidiary Philippine Telephone Corp.

Makati Med's owners and management have been tapping business gurus who can help them correct the worsening situation and eventually turn the hospital's finances around.

Pangilinan is the latest being asked to find a cure to Makati Med's problems. Only recently, the Makati Med board tapped former Ayala executive at Management consultant Carlos Mendoza to join the hospital.

"Yes, I have been invited (to be a director) and I am considering it," Pangilinan said in a text message.

"But I am looking at the situation, particularly the Med's financial problems, thinking problems and if I see a lot of problems through," he added.

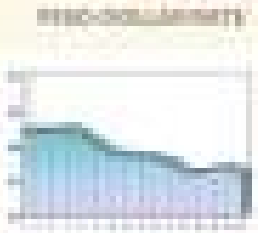
Asked whether he had already been asked to go in recently, Pangilinan simply said that Makati Med's situation was that it really needed new capital, Mr. Alcuaz elaborated.

Sources said Makati Med's net worth stood at only P1.4 billion last year against P11 billion in 2003. Outstanding loans, they added, now total more than P2 billion.

The hospital reportedly managed to register a net income of P20.3 million in 2003 but ...

(story continues on B/S 2)

CURRENCIES



P53.819 = $1

As of 5 p.m., June 24, 2005

P56.33 = €1

As of 5 p.m., June 24, 2005

GOLD: HIGH-LOW

per ounce Hong Kong, June 24, 2005

STOCK MARKET

Volatile trading seen

PSE COMPOSITE INDEX

(See stock market report on Page B/S)

TRADERS buy and sell vegetables at the giant vegetable trading post in Dangla, Trinidad valley, Benguet. Potatoes, carrots, cabbages and other vegetables are trucked into the wholesale market from barrio-level mountain plots across the Cordillera region, where some 4,000 wholesalers buy between 1,000 and 1,500 tonnes (2.2-3.3 million pounds) of vegetables every day, said the market inspector. These are eventually sold in Manila and other urban centers.

AFP

WHAT'S INSIDE

SMC to tap Australian fund to complete NutFoods takeover ... B/4

CROSSWORD ... B/5

Distributed by Newspaper Direct

DAY, JUNE 27, 2005

oject

By Ronnel W. Domingo

THE BOARD of Investments announced it had approved tax incentives for a P980-million bio-diesel project of Chemrez Inc.

The project comes at a time when the use of alternative fuels is being pushed to cushion the effects of escalating crude oil prices.

Chemrez currently produces resins, colorants and chemicals.

Chemrez is a unit of D&L Group—a leading provider of colors, chemicals and plastics in the country.

Under the new project, the company would produce bio-diesel using crude coconut oil as raw material.

The firm would also put up the first and most modern large-scale bio-diesel plant in Asia.

The plant is capable of producing 50,000 metric tons of bio-diesel a year.

The product, which would be sold under the brand "Bioactiv," was described as an enhancer that will help burn the fuel cleanly, without having to modify diesel engines.

According to the BOI, the product treats many of the problems that other additives address, such as cleansing, lubricating and oxygenating the fuel for efficient combustion, longer mileage and cleaner emission.

The agency said extensive tests conducted in the Philippines, Japan and Korea confirm the benefits of the product.

It is recommended that Bioactiv be blended with diesel at ratios between 1 and 5 percent.

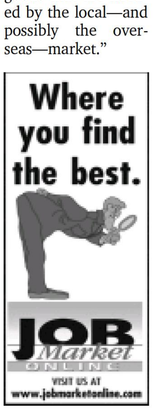
Trade Secretary Juan B. Santos said the development of coco bio-diesel was considered a major breakthrough for the country, being the first to tap coconut oil to fuel diesel motors.

It was also for this reason that the BOI granted pioneer status to Chemrez's project.

BOI-registered projects enjoy incentives, such as income tax holidays, duty-free importation of capital equipment and other fiscal and non-fiscal perks.

Santos encouraged other companies to develop new products using raw materials that are abundant in the country.

"Using indigenous products as raw materials develops our local industries and at the same time produces manufactured goods that are needed by the local—and possibly the overseas—market."



Business unusual at ABS-CBN

TODAY had been a newsy, most stressful day for ABS-CBN honchos Eugenio Lopez III and Luis Alejandro.

The two spent the whole day handholding while handing out letters of redundancy to 55 news and current affairs staffers, including the most senior, vice president Jose Mendoza, as word on the potential severance of the late patriarch Eugenio Lopez Jr., reporter Twinkle Valdez.

Talking heads from Valte, Pia Hontiveros, and Sonia Soto to Mendoza, spend the early morning, although all three still remain "talents" and will continue hearing their respective talk shows.

According to the grapevine, a number of the 55 news-to-broadcasters broke down upon receiving the news, despite the management offer of a generous three-month salary for every year of service as separation package.

The early carnival-like atmosphere at ABS-CBN changed when the news and current affairs division, right on the target 20 percent across-the-board reduction that the management hopes to achieve in order to retain the fallen market leader lush on championship turf.

To strengthen news gathering and elevate it from the sensational, television ratings rise to primetime TV. Third but soon-rising in-one hour airtime, ABS-CBN appointed former CBN regional bureau chief Maria Sotto, who joined January as consultant, as news and current affairs head.

The reorganization to be headed by Erap Press Secretary Ricardo Puno Jr., who chose to remain as talk show host after he was made to toe the management line that news executives could not simultaneously host public affairs programs.

Along with Sotto, a former staffer Cherie Mita, has also been lured back from Solaire TV fame to head newsgathering, replacing Jarred Jude Sto. Tomas, whom the network had pirated from UNTV.

"The objective of this reorganization is to strengthen the position of ABS-CBN as the most credible and respected broadcaster of news and current affairs, guided by world-class values, principles, and operating standards," Lopez and Alejandro said in a joint statement.

Henceforth, if the grapevine news to be believed, the Lopez network would also include critical news instead of feel-good treatments that Lopez-related companies like Manila Electric Co. and Manila Health Center Telecare Corp. have been getting.

Still unlike GMA-7, ABS-CBN will continue with its policy of prohibiting its news anchors and personnel from endorsing commercial products, as well as taking on political and public relations consultancies, another ABS-CBN official added.

Taiwan firm investing ₱738M in Subic

By Rommel W. Dominguez

MS ELECTRONICS giant headquartered in Taiwan is investing ₱738 million to assemble personal digital assistants at the Subic Bay Industrial Park, the Department of Trade and Industry said.

Pilatron Information (Philippines) Corp., the local unit of Pilatron Corp., is currently engaged in the manufacture of motherboards and laptop computer units and is the biggest export earner in Subic.

Pilatron also makes computer peripherals, fax machines, integrated circuits, and microelectronic parts and software for business computer brands like Acer, IBM and Hitachi.

In 2004, Pilatron posted revenues of $747 million or about two-thirds of the total export earnings within the Subic freeport.

The DTI said that for the new project, Pilatron would hire 395 additional workers by the second quarter of 2006 to produce some 300,000 units of PDA devices every month.

The output, which are used as electronic organizers or day planners, would be distributed in Europe, the United States and Asia.

Trade Secretary Juan D. Ponce Enrile said the board of investments had approved tax perks and other incentives for Pilatron's project since it would be the first project in the manufacture of PDAs.

Ponce said the company's decision showed the confidence of Taiwanese businessmen in putting up big ticket projects in the country and making it their manufacturing base for sophisticated products.

Ponce Enrile also noted investors "should get a deep trust in the capability of Filipino workers in producing high-end consumer electronic products for the export market."

PDAs, also called handhelds or palmtops, have become popular because of their small size, ease in using and capability to share information with personal computers.

Aside from managing personal information such as contacts, appointments and to-do lists, the latest models of the gadgets could connect to the Internet, act as global positioning system (GPS) devices and run multimedia software. Some manufacturers have combined PDAs with cell phones, multimedia players and other functions of electronic gadgetry.

According to the DTI, Pilatron has the capability of embedding software of the latest features and functions into its products.

Cocktales

Victor C. Ajanotin

The return of George Go

IT looks like George Go is dead set in returning to Equitable PCIBank.

According to the grapevine, the former bank chair has already returned his lawyer, retired Justice Manuel Lazaro, to represent him in his retirement to a board seat in the Go family holding corporation, Multisable Development Corp., which would be George's backdoor route toward regaining a board seat in Equitable PCIBank.

George, who could do no wrong in the eyes of his family when he engineered the Equitable takeover of PCIBank during the Estrada years, was somewhat less neutral by his brothers and sisters when the political winds shifted and Erap fled from Malacañang.

If the grapevine is to be believed, George is now even redecorating with the title and EBR, and even providing directions that not only are the Go matron really supervising the 70-percent block held by the family's investment banking subsidiary, the family has also been setting for themselves the shareholdings of the Equitable Foundation, the bank's charity arm, to keep their "unofficial majority" hold on the fumigated banks.

George Go is said to be spending most of his time now in California, Ontario, to that why Equitable PCIBank vice chair Teresita Rivera Ruiz-Galindez left last week for San Francisco?

Money-go-round

● THE IMUS-ERIS Lakas party is hearing the controversial LDS building to bigger offices in the Elan Towers, also in Legaspi Village, a building owned by the family of ERIS political adviser Joey Rufino.

● THE LANDMARK Mall's Restaurant in Greenbelt is next month moving across the street to a much smaller space in Greenbelt 5, in view of Ayala Land's plan to demolish the structure and the temporary parking garage behind it.

Heard through the grapevine

UNILAB Just Ann Campos Jr. is seriously planning to acquire the Chito stake in Del Monte provided he could find a way to dislodge a powerful rights offer to the minority shareholders, including the Lorenzos, of the Singapore-listed canned foods conglomerate.

Campos wants to bid in Del Monte within his profitable UBC ravaga Chocolate-maker business.

(Email: cocktales_pdi@philnet.net or cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com)

FIRST QUARTER

Public sector deficit below target at ₱56.6B

By Michelle V. Ramos

THE DEFICIT of the entire public sector grew year-on-year by 18 percent to ₱56.6 billion in the first quarter, as the national government posted a slightly higher budget gap and local governments were generated a lower surplus.

The latest consolidated public sector deficit (CPSD)—which includes among others the deficits (or surplus) of the national government, LGUs and state-owned companies—was equivalent to 4.7 percent of the country's gross domestic product.

Historical data from the Department of Finance showed that the CPSD stood at only 0.1 billion in the first quarter of 2004.

Despite the growth in the CPSD, the Department of Finance said the public sector remained on track to meet the target of reducing the deficit to only ₱200.81 billion for the full year, from ₱181.0 billion recorded for the whole of 2004.

It noted that despite the increase in the deficit, the figure was still better than the official CPSD target for the period of ₱69.9 billion.

The DOF said measures aimed at generating more revenues for the national government and at instilling financial discipline among government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs) were seen to impact in the second half of the year.

"This is a good start. We are inspired by the gains we have achieved so far and continue to persevere with our reform initiatives especially government reforms in our GOCCs, which remain a crucial weak link in our fiscal position," Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said in a statement.

DOF data showed that the increase in the CPSD in the first quarter was attributed partly to the ₱6.62 billion increase in the deficit of the national government. The national government's budget deficit for the period was earlier reported to have stood at ₱65.47 billion from the year-ago level of ₱58.85 billion.

The national government's budget deficit was, however, better than the official target of ₱77.8 billion.

While the national government missed its deficit to be higher year-on-year in the first quarter, it targets to post a decline for the full year. The DOF has set a target of reducing the national government's budget deficit for the whole year to only ₱180 billion from ₱187 billion last year.

The DOF even projected that the actual deficit of the national government for 2005 would be better than target, on proceeds of recently implemented fiscal reform measures are expected to impact in the second half.

SMC to tap Australian fund to complete NatFoods takeover

By Dan C. Gamba and Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN MIGUEL CORP., Southeast Asia's largest food and beverage firm, plans to tap into a A$200-million debt facility to complete its takeover of Australian dairy giant National Foods Ltd., Inquirer sources said.

Sources said SMC would use the fund to acquire the remaining shares in NatFoods.

The takeover of National Foods is SMC's largest investment this year, and was seen strengthening SMC's foothold in the fast-growing food and beverage market in Australia.

SMC has gained 96 percent of NatFoods, but it still has to make a "compulsory offer" to buy the remaining shares of those who did not accept its offer of A$6.60a share.

In a bidding war launched late last year, SMC's A$1.4-billion offer (roughly $1.1 billion) beat that of its closest rival, New Zealand's Fonterra Cooperative Group.

SMC had said it would fund its proposed acquisition of NatFoods through a combination of debt and cash on hand.

It has reserved debt offers worth $1.1 billion from ABN AMRO Bank N.V., Barclays Capital (the investment banking division of Barclays Bank PLC), HSBC Ltd., Standard Chartered Bank and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corporation.

Further leveling up its war chest is SMC's P17.6-billion stock rights offer completed in April this year.

NatFoods shares were taken off the Australian Stock Exchange last June 22 following SMC's acquisition.

Five non-executive directors have also retired from the company's board.

Still in the NatFoods boardroom are director Peter Margin, SMC president Ramon Ang and San Miguel Foods and Beverage International Ltd. president Enrique Goman.

Sources added that it has yet to be known whether SMC will create a holding company for NatFoods.

The vehicle it used to acquire the dairy firm was San Miguel Foods Australia Holdings.

SMC, which generated revenues of $P4.2 billion in 2004, launched a takeover bid for NatFoods late last year.

The company has two other businesses in Australia, premium brewer J. Boag and San, a wholly-owned subsidiary, and trading fruit juice company Inver, Ltd., where it has a majority stake.

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Volatile trading seen

for analysts of the Philippine (PSE), said the group was pleased "that the President has chosen the high ground in maintaining her Executive Department agenda rather than fall into the way of charges and countercharges, which will distract her from her economic programs."

"WAP believes that the way the issues have been handled by both sides (opposition and government) to date has contributed to the distance of uncertainty prevailing in the capital markets," INQ7.net/bb said.

BPI Trade summed in its weekly market report that "investors are concerned that the political clutter will erode the economic gains the country has achieved and thus it may drive new investments from coming to the country."

BPI Trade also said the fate of crude oil prices (at new highs of $60 a barrel) spooked investors. Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Bayantel may lose frequencies

By Clarissa S. Balleo

BAYANTEL Telecommunications Phils. Inc. and its subsidiary Express Telecommunications Inc. may soon lose their mobile phone frequencies, according to the National Telecommunications Commission.

NTC chair Ronald Solis said that the NTC may recall idle frequencies once active wireless carriers request additional spectrum for their expansion.

"At the cancellation of the frequencies, we want this 3000 resource to be fully maximized. If an unused, then we can reissue [it] to another provider which would have to go through a public hearing," said Solis.

Solis added that the NTC was making available under the third generation or 3G wireless operations some of the frequencies allocated for Bayantel and Filipino Telephone Corp.

Frequency bands under the 3000 megahertz issued by the NTC to Bayantel and Piltel were identified by the International Telecommunications Union as suitable for 3G.

The NTC is bidding out only the 3G frequency bands this year.

3G is the new generation of mobile applications that allows faster downloading and uploading, enabling people to see each other while talking on their mobile phones.

The Philippines is still using the second-generation technology of mobile phones.

"In the case of Piltel and Bayantel, we are making available the 800 bandwidth for 3G, which means they could upgrade to 3G if they are qualified," said Solis.

"If they qualify, they can use the frequencies. But if they don't, then we can recall it," the NTC chief added.

In the case of idle wireless operators like Extelcom and Bayantel, Solis said that the NTC could also recall their frequencies once the Commission would get new requests for additional spectrum.

The NTC had awarded all the available spectrum for 3G operations.

The last 3 megahertz was split between Smart Communications Inc. and Digital Telecommunications Phils. Inc.

While it has the license to go into cellular operations, Bayantel had not expanded into the mobile business.

Its subsidiary, Extelcom, had been inactive with less than 200,000 subscribers.

Extelcom has 20 megahertz under the 800 band, while Bayantel has 10 megahertz, each on the 1700 and 1800 bands.

Solis said the provincial authority issued to Extelcom provide a timetable under which they should complete their network roll-out.

Pollux insists their right to the assigned frequencies would be revalued by the government.

If the takeover of a certain frequency won't be contested by the other party, then the carriers need only to discuss the terms of transfer, including the fees.

The outgoing operator has to be compensated, according to Solis, because that carrier already paid spectrum users' fees to the NTC.

The 3G would use a higher frequency, which would also make it more expensive to operate.

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Unsure insurance

No Free Lunch
Cielito F. Habito

If you own a motor vehicle, you're likely well aware that come next year you need to go through at the Land Transportation Office (LTO) to renew its registration. And you know about the compulsory Third Party Liability (CTPL) insurance that you have to purchase before you can renew your registration renewal papers. This is the insurance that covers costs suffered by a third party due to death or bodily injuries when your vehicle is involved in an accident. This is just one among several forms of "public transportation" required for car lovers for things like upon using a private or a public utility vehicle, the jeepney for land, water or air transport), obtaining a local business license, moving goods in a bonded warehouse, and so on. These requirements are usually embodied in Republic Act (RA) 1400, as amended by PD 164-B, that for registering a motor vehicle is provided for in the Local Government Code (the P.360).

Flip-flop night

The problem with many of these compulsory public liability coverage instruments is that we are often unsure whether the insurance we are buying is a true insurance. In the case of motor vehicle registration, the Insurance Code requires land transport operators and private vehicle owners to obtain insurance coverage amounting to not less than P50,000. For land transport operators, coverage for each passenger or third party of no less than P12,000 each is also required.

It is no secret that many of those selling CTPL coverage reportedly in the name of LTO brokers are simply just selling you that piece of paper called the Certificate of Cover (COC), which must accompany your application for renewal of your vehicle's registration. Try making a claim when your vehicle meets an accident, and the insurance agent either gives you the runaround, or the insurance company proves to be non-existent.

Willing victims

The problem is, many who come to the LTO to register their vehicles probably don't even care that they're buying fake insurance coverage. Many economist terms to the CTO unprepared, i.e. without having purchased CTPL coverage from a licensed and trained insurer beforehand, and often they come right on the deadline for their vehicle's registration renewal. Their main concern is to get the paperwork over with as soon as possible, within the same visit, and given the way most LTO branches are treating with paddy-fisters, [word illegible] the prominent signs telling the public not to deal with them would keep them away) and rewarded with harassed applicants, anyone would want to get out of the place as quickly as he/she can! Those who are prepared to do that is a few hundred pesos just to get the needed COC, never mind that it may not come with genuine insurance coverage behind it.

It is this situation that is exploited by the fly-by-night operators. But what is worse is that there have been allegations that LTO officials themselves have been in cahoots with it! not the actual owners of these fake insurers. Considering the volume of applicants who come on any given day there must be a great deal of money being made here. (There's also the P500 emission test, and for driver's license renewal applicants, the P260 "drug test" and the P50 "seminar" which is nothing more than a cursory eyesight test—clearly lucrative side industries coming from the LTO processes as well—but these are beyond the scope of our topic here.)

Massive tax losses

It is not only the public that is hurt by fake CTPL insurance policies, through accident claims that are never paid. The government is also deprived of substantial revenues that could have been made if all insurance policies issued were legitimate. Since the Insurance Commission (IC) indicates how massive fund here to counter the fake CTPL insurance business has been, in 2002 alone, there were about 4.2 million vehicles registered. Considering the average premiums paid per vehicle, the IC estimates that the total premiums paid become should have amounted to P2.6 billion, with a corresponding tax due to government of P579 million or 22.5 percent of premiums.

But actual premium collections reported to the insurance commission only amounted to P1.06 billion, or just over half of what is collectible, which means that almost half of the CTPL insurance issued to registered vehicles was unreported, and presumably false! The corresponding tax paid to the government was only P238 million (i.e. 22.5 percent of P1.06 billion), out of the potential P579 million...or a revenue loss of P068 million in 2002 alone. Then, over the years, the government has been losing billions of pesos in foregone revenues from fake CTPL insurance policies—hardly a comforting thought in this time of fiscal crisis.

Beyond LTO

The recent drive to force most registered vehicles to head now more vehicles—thereby requiring them over insurance coverage in with—can only be commended, because the fraudulent practices that have been rampant in the insurance industry, unless the government can move to effectively curb fake insurance policies. And as indicated above, CTO registration is just one instance where this can be happening. Similar it may be in other areas, for instance with third party liability insurance purchased by businesses as a requirement for business permits with local governments, as with all other forms of public liability coverage required by law for the various transactions. It seems that wherever you look, it risks manage to find an opportunity for defrauding the public and the government...and make huge amounts of illicit income. One can only wish that everyone made honest the old-fashioned way: by earning it. Comments welcome at cfabito@mirae.edu

Please turn to B11

Ailing Makati Med looks . . .

loss in 2004 out of 19.6 billion in revenues, the second highest, according to the source, was staggering.

Pangilinan, according to another source, was losing discretionary bills advances from taking the Makati Med post.

Pangilinan is recognized as an astute businessman. He may have put a lot of money into charitable organizations but he would not plunge "into something with problems at random" in Makati Medical Center.

Makati Med was founded in the 1960s by Dr. Constantino D Manuhin, Dr. Jose T. Sison, Dr. Mariano M. Mercurio, Dr. Carlos L. Sevilla and Luis Ma. Asuncion.

Some Dublic, Manuel Fernandez Jr., Jorge Jamaen, Raul Fores, Julian Lodovica and Daniel Lo. Of the six, only Daniel Go is now a member of the board.

Other Makati Med directors are Armando Ekkapac, Jaime Constantino, Manahan, Jolinda E. Bush, Gerente Q. Arpadita and Dr. Edmundo F. Villacorta.

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UNDERSERVED MARKET

Innove targets SMEs to boost fixed line business

By Abigail L. Ho

CEBU CITY, Cebu—After recently being granted the authority to become the country's second nationwide fixed line service provider, Innove Communications Inc. is now targeting small and medium enterprises to grow its business.

Dubbed by the huge head of domestic carrier Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Innove's network management head Ramon Aseguinolaza said much of the SME market remained underserved in terms of services that could be bundled with the basic fixed line.

"There's still a lot of demand. The SME market will be a main target as there are still a lot of services that can be provided for that sector," he said in a recent briefing.

Asked whether Innove would be focusing more on untapped markets or also entering somewhere of other landline providers, he said the telecom firm would be targeting both.

According to data from the National Telecommunications Commission, there are more than 3.4 million landline subscribers all over the country. Total installed lines, however, was placed at around 8 million.

PLDT is the dominant player in the market, with over 2 million landline subscribers.

Lopez-led Bayan Telecommunications Inc. has another 300,000 as of end-2004, while Innove has 341,877 subscribers at the end of the first quarter this year.

The NTC more than a week ago approved Innove's application to install telephone lines all over the country, despite stiff opposition from other carriers.

In an earlier statement, Innove said it would roll out an initial 145,000 lines in the National Capital Region, Cordillera Administrative Region, and in regions 1-3 and 5-11 as a core of around P5 billion.

The firm noted that the penetration rate was seven lines, with only about 1.24 phones for every 100 residents in Region V. Metro Manila has the highest phone penetration with 22 lines for every 100 residents.

The additional rollout was seen generating P321 million in revenues by the first year alone, jumping to P1.3 billion by the fifth year and P1.8 billion by the eighth year.

On the other hand, operating expenses for the added landlines would likely hit P284 million in the first year, climbing to P677 million in the fifth year and P677 million in the 10th year.

Before being allowed to go nationwide, Innove's service area only covered Makati, Mandaluyong, Mandaue, Pasig and San Juan in Metro Manila, as well as Batangas, Cavite, Mindoro Oriental, Palawan, Lanao del Norte, Lanao del Sur, North Cotabato, Bulacan, Bataan and Maguindanao, plus some operations in regional 6-8.

The NTC had yet to grant Innove with a certificate of public convenience and necessity (CPCN) to establish, install, operate and maintain a nationwide local exchange carrier service.

Instead, however, was given an 18-month provisional authority to conduct a nationwide rollout prior to the issuance of the CPCN.

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Thursday, June 30, 6:30 p.m.
Saturday, July 2, 10:30 a.m.

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ARMM... business, jobs and peace

MINDANAWORLD

Ayit Kayam-Mara

XWAKONDE: the region's business climate for better economic growth will be the main thrust of the 6th Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) business Congress slated June 28 to 29, 2005 in Bongao, Tawi-Tawi.

Some 600 key business leaders, ARMM businessmen, government officials and nongovernmental organization representatives will converge to discuss vital issues that affect the conduct of business and investment in the region.

ARMM is composed of five provinces and one city: Basilan, Lanao del Sur, Maguindanao, Sulu, Tawi-Tawi and Shariff City.

Basilan has a population of 270,000 and the capital city is Isabela. However, Isabela City is independent of the province because in the recent plebiscite, it was only the residents of Basilan who opted to join ARMM, with the exception of Isabela City.

Lanao del Sur has one of the largest populations, together with Maguindanao, with over 800,000 people.

Found in the interior of Lanao del Sur is Lanao Lake, the largest lake in Mindanao. Sulu is an island province and is home to the Royal Sultanate of Sulu and has a population of 600,000.

Shariff City is a major city of the Philippines and it is one of the urban centers of Mindanao, since the Mindanao State University is located here.

Investment destination

Promoting ARMM, particularly Tawi-Tawi, as an investment destination will be among the objectives of this year's business gathering.

Abdi Taharin, Regional Board of Investments (RBOI) chair in the ARMM said that the region benefited from more than P8.8 billion worth of investments in 2003.

He added that more than 10 existing franchises also expanded their operations in the region. Fruits, seaweed, cassava, coconut and rubber are the major products of ARMM.

Two years ago, I was in Bongao upon the invitation of my very good friend, Dr. Bonny Tarap, a former Regional Governor of the PMI, Chambers of Commerce (PCCI).

Together with the Tawi-Tawi Chamber of Commerce, they made my visit so unforgettable. They led me with the best guides, the boys, jokesters and the freshest lapu-lapu ever cane knew.

They gave me boxes of dried lapu-lapu to bring home. And still did we deserve such a feast and gifts were to speak for 30 minutes on the importance of transparency in government.

This year, much of Tawi-Tawi's natural scene from the sea, from the rich fishing grounds to wonderful ocean of white sand beaches and vibrant coral reefs.

It has an airport, and Bongao's horseshoe shaped seaport is said to be the busiest in the Sulu archipelago.

In major products are fish and processed shell products, seaweeds, coconut, corn, palay and rootcrops.

The Tawi-Tawi Chamber is also one of PCCI's pilot chambers currently doing projects in population management as part of their corporate social responsibility, under the chairmanship of Dr. Gay Hadjirul and Dr. Ismail Hamid.

I can still remember PCCI president Ronald Dee telling me that he sure so glad that a Muslim Chamber in the ARMM is actively committed to the population advocacy of PCCI.

ARMM Business Conference

"It's about time that we join the other provinces in moving towards economic progress. If we have a flourishing business sector, we can create more jobs and gradually eliminate poverty. We are good to say that we are a peaceful region, and there are numerous business opportunities that await entrepreneurs in the ARMM," stressed Ibra Hasan Basalla, ARMM Business Council chair.

He also indicated that the business sector in the ARMM wants the national government to address the power issue turning off investors.

Plenary sessions on transport infrastructure, educational systems, telecommunications, renewed production and marketing, governance and cross-border trading, as well as investment incentives in ARMM will be conducted during the two-day activity.

The assembly will also signify the business community's call for a stronger campaign against corruption, as it launches the creation of an anti-corruption body to implement a tough anti-corruption program.

To strengthen economic and cross border trading, a trade fair exhibits as well as business matching sessions will be held. Exhibitors from Malaysia, Indonesia and other Asean countries will be present.

Let us all go and join the business assemblage in Tawi-Tawi! Let us all go and support ARMM! Investing in ARMM is investing in peace and development!

Ayit Kayam-Mara is a strong advocate for Mindanao; vice chair of the Mindanao Commission of Women and National Core Board, chair of the Mindanao TNET, member Export Development Council and former chair of the Mindanao Business Council. Email comments to editor@inquirer.com.ph

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For RP, 1% hike in global rates seen to cost $225M

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE PUBLISHED foreign debt burden rises by around $225 million for every one-percentage increase in global interest rates, the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas estimated.

The country's recorded debt stock amounted to $55.3 billion as of end-March, 2.4 percent lower than the $56.7 billion posted in the same period last year.

"If you look at the maturity profile, out of the available stock, 56 percent is in medium to long term loans ... about $49.8 billion," said Amanda Tetangco Jr., BSP officer-in-charge.

Out of the total MLT loans, he noted that 21.4 percent was carrying variable interest rates, which mean this was the portion affected by a 100-basis-point rise in interest rates.

"The impact is then $178 million (increase in interest servicing) on MLT loans, and $42 million on short-term loans ... a total of about $220 million for one-percentage change," Tetangco said.

London-based credit rating agency Fitch Ratings said most emerging economies, including the Philippines, were cushioned to some ground against continuing risks of a "Sudden Stop" in capital flows.

Such a "Sudden Stop" occurs when there is a sharp and non-benign correction of global imbalances caused by the twin current account and budget deficits of the US, resulting in an unanticipated rise in its dollar interest rates, hence global growth is seen to be curtailed, Fitch added.

In its June commentary on sovereigns, Fitch said its overall assessment was that emerging markets as a whole were relatively "well placed" to absorb the risks posed by the growing global imbalances.

But Fitch assumed that the recent surge in international borrowing by emerging markets banks and corporates on the risk of amplifying the impact of a severe downturn in the global economy.

It noted that expectations of higher US interest rates had already widened spreads across emerging markets in the first five months of this year, with Indonesia, the Philippines and Venezuela all having to accept higher yields on new borrowings.

Still, Fitch said emerging markets had become increasingly skilled at exploiting market opportunities, allowing them to refinance existing debt on more favorable terms and extend maturities at low interest rates.

"The Philippines, for example, now boasts of average external debt maturities of 13 years," Fitch said. "Similar debt management ... should ensure that any sudden deterioration in market sentiment takes longer to feed through to external debt service costs."

Foreign chambers to press for amendments to Epira

VARIOUS foreign chambers may submit a formal position calling for the amendment of certain provisions of RA 9136, or the Electric Power Industry Reform Act of 2001 (Epira).

A source from the energy sector said one particular provision that the foreign chambers were eyeing was Section 45(f), which deals with anti-diversification that had prevention component to the issue from.

Under that particular provision, distribution utilities can source up to 30 percent of their requirements from the same firms that are engaged in power generation.

The source had earlier said that this quasi-private sectors gave distribution giants like the Aboitiz-led Manila Electric Co. more reasons to dominate the market and keep all the rents within its coffers.

"As a result, it's hard for other investors to get [power purchase agreements] with Meralco," the source said.

He said if he added uncertainty to investing in the country's power sector as potential investors might think they would have a difficult time getting contracts with big power distributors that had affiliates to the generation sector.

Meralco currently sources around 30 percent of its supply requirements from two Lopez-led natural gas plants: the 1,000-MW Ilijan plant, and the 500-MW San Lorenzo plant, both in Batangas. The plants are under the First Gen Power Corp.

In defense of the said provision, another source explained that Meralco's agreement with First Gen was not put in place by virtue of their being sister firms, but because First Gen offered "the most competitive price."

Abigail L. Ho

Water pollution creates tidal waves

Mindanao power firm seeks funding for 20-MW coal plant construction

By Abigail L. Ho

POWER generation firm Mindanao Energy Systems Inc. (Misenyo) is seeking funding for the construction of a 20-MW coal-fired power plant to supplement the power supply in Misamis Oriental.

The proposed plant may cost around P600,000 per megawatt (MW) to build, according to Misenyo.

The company wants to use the electricity of the 20-MW plant to stave off the power shortage in Mindanao, which is said to come in 2007, said Ramon Abeto, chair of Misenyo since its inception in the Cluster Power and Light Co.

But Misenyo has yet to secure the approval of the Energy Regulatory Board for the proposed power facility. There are also no funds for the project as yet.

"We have no funding yet, for now many talk is in some local lenders for funding of around $600,000 per MW as prices have gone down a bit to only a little over half (the usual price)," Abeto said.

Previously, it took around $1 mil lion to install 1 MW of capacity.

Abeto also stressed the urgency of the project as the Mindanao grid was run mostly "on crisis mode."

"There are not enough reserves," he said. "This is considered critical because if one of the grids suffers an outage, there will no longer be enough power."

Communities and towns across the island will then experience power outages, "probably with the exception of major cities like Cagayan (under) Capitol and Davao (Light Land Power Co.), which both have generation of Iligan is rely on," Abeto added.

He said one of the reasons for the lack of supply was the delay in the transfer of power barges from the Visayas to Mindanao.

Two more barges that had been assigned to Mindanao also met with "considerable delays, making the situation even worse," Abeto said.

He said the operation of Global Synchronic International Inc., formerly the Saramsal Steel Corp., would make the Mindanao power situation even more critical.

"Everything is dependent on (National Power Corp.) plants," he explained.

Abeto had said in an earlier interview that, as early as now, the Mindanao grid was already experiencing power shortfalls, which became more pronounced during the summer months as the main grid was heavily dependent on hydroelectric facilities for its power supply.

The coal-fired power plant for Misamis Oriental province got would provide additional power to the grid and help alleviate the current crisis situation, he said.

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RP card holders not at risk in US security breach

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE BANKO Sentral ng Pilipinas has assured Filipino credit card holders that they are not at risk from the controversial credit card security breach in the United States.

The security breach has exposed over 40 million users of Visa and MasterCard across the globe to potential fraud.

Amando Tetangco Jr., BSP governor-in-charge, told reporters at the sidelines of an IT-Bangko Central summit that the domestic impact of the security breach would be "minimal."

Tetangco said there was a precedent by which fraudulent transactions could be verified.

"The breach was in a credit card processing center in the US, and card companies have installed fraud detection systems," Tetangco explained.

Just in case a billing error occurs, a card holder can always contest it, he added.

Visa credit card users in the Philippines stood at about 6.1 million, while MasterCard has about 0.5 million customers.

The latest international credit card controversy erupted after a hacker reportedly gained access to a key database and installed a script that acts like a virus, searching out certain types of card transaction data.

Of the cards involved, 13.9 million were MasterCard, which includes Maestro and Cirrus, and 22 million were Visa.

The breach was traced to the Tucson office of CardSystems Solutions, a company that processes transactions on behalf of merchants and financial institutions.

At least 68,000 MasterCard accounts, 180,000 Visa accounts and 20,000 accounts from other card brands are known to have been exposed by the hackers. The data exposed included names, card numbers and card security codes.

CardSystems held customer credit card data by keeping a file on credit card transactions that failed to receive authorization.

Both MasterCard and Visa prohibited card processors from storing cardholder information after transactions.

The is now reviewing whether it would continue to work with CardSystems while MasterCard and Dec 8 is giving the company a "limited amount of time" to demonstrate compliance.

CardSystems said it had taken some measures to correct the breach, and enhanced its security procedures.

RP current account seen to remain at a surplus

THE BANGKO Sentral ng Pilipinas expects the country's current account (CA) to remain in a surplus of $1.68 billion this year, less than the $2 billion it chalked up in 2004.

Global credit rating agencies like Standard & Poor's believe the CA is still one of the fundamental strengths of the Philippine economy especially since remittances from overseas Filipino workers tend to offset swings in external trade, resulting from volatile crude global demand.

BSP Assistant Governor Diwa Guinigundo said for the first quarter, the CA surplus stood at $568 million, equivalent to 1.3 percent of the gross domestic product and about four times below than the $140 million posted in the same period last year.

The strong CA position in the first quarter was fueled by higher surplus in current transfers, as well as lower deficits in trade in goods, services and income accounts.

The CA is a major component of the balance of payments (BOP) which, in turn, measures the foreign exchange transactions between the economy and the rest of the world.

In the BOP, any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident, like importation or offshore investment, is a debit item, while any transaction which gives rise to a receipt, like exporting or inward investment and investment, is a credit item.

The strong CA surplus in the first quarter contributed to the BOP surplus of $782 million during the period.

For the full year, the BSP still sees the trade account incurring a deficit as the value of imports – due to rising oil prices – will rise to exceed export receipts.

As reflected in data in the first three months of the year, imports of merchandise products, the country's main foreign exchange earner, are projected to rise by double digit in the remainder of 2005, which is expected to manifest in the latter part of 2005.

Meanwhile, earnings are projected to expand by 8 percent to $41.03 billion, while the import bill is seen to grow by 10 percent to $49.43 billion.

However, income and remittances and current transfers are seen to contribute to the full-year CA surplus.

For this year, the BSP expects overseas income remitted through the banks to grow by 10 percent to $2.94 billion, and current transfers by overseas Filipino workers to expand by the same magnitude to hit $9.65 billion.

Doris C. Dumlao

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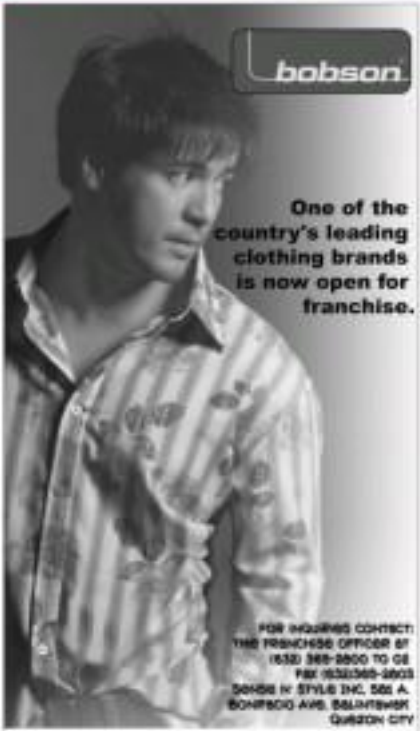

Regulator turns down Lifetime Plans petition

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE SECURITIES and Exchange Commission on Friday rejected the petition of pre-need firm Lifetime Plans Inc. to reverse the ruling of the corporate watchdog terminating Lifetime's corporate existence.

In a statement issued Saturday, the SEC said it denied Lifetime's motion for reconsideration due to lack of merit.

With the SEC decision, Lifetime will have to be folded back to its troubled parent firm Pacific Plans Inc., said Ferand Lidihan, SEC secretary.

Lifetime spokesperson Leonard V. Nuera in a statement said that the pre-need firm would appeal the ruling.

"While we did not expect the SEC to reverse itself, we believe we have strong legal grounds against the order of revocation," Nuera said.

In the meantime, he said, LPI would work closely with Pacific Plans to ensure that no Lifetime employee or sales agent would be displaced.

Nuera also assured beneficiaries that their benefits would continue to roll in. He asked the over of Lifetime's 400,000 plan holders to continue paying the premiums to prevent their policies from lapsing.

In a five-page resolution, the SEC said it saw no valid reason to reverse its previous ruling revoking the certificate of registration of Lifetime.

It said it cancelled Lifetime's certificate after the latter failed to comply with certain requirements that would show it had resources to sustain its operations.

Lifetime's submissions in compliance with the order were also found to be insufficient, according to the SEC's Company Registration and Monitoring Department (CRMD).

The SEC in Dec. allowed PPI to spin off to preclose, memorial and a portion of its educational plans in August last year vis-à-vis subsidiary Lifetime.

PPI was then asked to show proof that it transferred assets to Lifetime Plans. These included collected receivables worth P463.5 million, and the transfer of ownership of transportation equipment with a net book value of P5.7 million to Lifetime.

PPI also subscribed to Lifetime's capital stock worth P200.14 million.

Shares of Lifetime would only be issued to PPI after the another firm offered proof that Lifetime indeed owned these assets.

The SEC said, neither PPI nor Lifetime had complied with the requirement.

In its resolution, the SEC said that "the documents tendered [were] not petty cash that can be brushed aside as inconsequential for (the) purpose of determining whether Lifetime's capital base is sufficient to meet the financial requirements of its customer-clients.

"The CRMD staff could find itself in serious administrative trouble if it did not scrutinize (the transaction [of PPI's] articles of incorporation)," the SEC said. "In the end of the day, it is the people who transact business with Lifetime that will be prejudiced if it is to see that the assets that are supposed to sustain Lifetime are not available to satisfy the requirements of its planholders."

The SEC's move will grossly affect the parent firm, Pacific Plans.

PPI earlier sought a court's permission in seekings rehabilitation.

PPI now runs the risk of being denied rehabilitation after the SEC has reasoned that Lifetime would have to be folded back under Pacific Plans.

Also, the SEC argued that PPI's petition for rehabilitation should be dismissed for being moot and academic.

Finance department seen to control GOCCs' fiscal problems by yearend

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said that by the end of the year, it would have instilled fiscal discipline among government-owned and -controlled corporations (GOCCs), whose huge losses were blamed in part for the country's fiscal woes.

The DOF earlier said that it had begun scrutinizing the financial reports of the state-owned firms. The reports would provide the basis for a study on whether the firms need to be privatized or abandoned.

The DOF and Dati'the 14 GOCCs owed to state down their combined budget deficits by as much as 53 percent, to only P82.3 billion this year. Last year, their deficits reached P90.7 billion.

DOF data showed that in the first quarter of the year, the combined net deficits of the 14 monitored GOCCs stood at P6.352 billion, or about 10 percent lower than the P9.233 billion recorded in the same period last year.

The National Power Corp., the heaviest loser among the GOCCs, posted P5.6 billion in deficit, while the National Food Authority had P4.2 billion in deficit. The Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System, on the other hand, recorded a surplus P1.43 billion, the biggest surplus recorded during the period.

Michelle T. Remo

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LIFESTYLE

Editor Chela Bañal-Fortuno
Associate Editor Lita B. Zulueta

AWARD WINNING actor Bernardo and the Philippine American theater group, Perseverance Theater, are the subjects of the cover story of the latest issue of American Theatre, the bible of the American dramatic arts. The story, by senior editor Randy Gener, takes note of the achievements of the theater group, particularly "Voyage," about four generations of Filipinos in Alaska. The production, according to the magazine, "captures the frontier lives and immigrant dreams of Filipino Alaskans."

Satya's music transcends barriers

HUGEL Faustmann and Jay Viray in Rep's "Whom Wife is Anyway"

MIDYEAR REPORT CARD

Explosion of young talents in the performing arts

EUGENE Fredrick Cuello, PPO music director and principal conductor

By Amadis Ma. Guerrero
Correspondent

THE PERFORMING arts started with a bang in the second quarter, and there was no slackening, no deficiency in the crescendo months. And in June, there was an explosion of youthful musical talents.

At the Cultural Center of the Philippines early in April, it was Cultural Night for the delegates of the 36th Anniversary Union (APU). Exposed talents and scrapers were tapped, traditional dances and songs continued to thrill, and new works were a delight. The "Pinabanggo sa Baso" was beautifully performed in darkness to spontaneous applause.

The exuberance of youth must have been an eye-opener for the foreigners, and a source of pride for us Pinoys. In June a similar extravaganza, with stellar talents led by Lea Salonga and sensibly directed by Soxsis Mercadejas, was staged for the Department of Tourism.

Soprano Alexis Edrada, 22, had an auspicious debut at the Philam Life Auditorium early in June. She regaled the audience with her impressive voice, rose to fatigue and stage presence. Edrada (UP College of Music) was partnered in some arias by another young and outstanding singer, the handsome tenor Rogelio Bulaseda Jr. (UST Conservatory of Music), and what beautiful music she can make!

Edrada and Bulaseda are gifted talents ready for the big time. The concert was directed by again, Dessa Macaraeg and produced by Audrey Baldoza. Their 2003 season encores its biggest with tenor Pelaseda in a solo recital.

Pelaseda and Edrada soared again a week later in "Filipinas Kong Mahal," featuring the magic of master composer Francisco Santiago, appropriately, at the Francisco Santiago Hall of the Escuela PCM Auditorium. Also in the program were young veterans like the superb Rachelle Garcellano, Nelson Camacho and Ramon Acopiso.

Pianist Oliver Saloneja and cellist Victor Michael Uy performed with the Manila Philharmonic Orchestra led by Rudel Colmenares, at the Philam Life, to ecstatic. "I have never seen anything like it since Ignacio Cruz," Uy, "I played the music from the night." He first a week later at the Pasig Museum during the Pasig Summer Festival, which earlier featured pianist Isa Monserrat-Isaac, a child prodigy who plays like an adult. (Cruz's collaborating artist was Hilary Anne Espina.)

It was youth on parade. And the platform of performances left some critics gaping.

Milestone

Monique Wilson celebrated her 25 years in theater (and her 20th birthday) in a special anniversary show at Music Museum. She was not her usual self on here, singing, commanding and chatting with the audience. It was a "bittersweet" event for her, however, for mentor Ellen Amador and Sandy Johnny Wilson were no longer around, and her mother Tony is bedridden.

The Teen Voice ensemble, including co-director Rito Asilo, and the Gipsy Gipsy Band led by Bonzi Jaymes, as always, provided excellent backup.

Allan Cruz and his brilliance are better known as visual artists but both have a background in theater, being the daughter of his friend Arsley Landrito Arellano and Daisy Hontiveros. The lovers also fine singers who have been taking formal voice lessons for quite some now.

The fruits of their rigorous rehearsals were presented recently at a recital for friends at the West residence in Quezon City. And, mind you, the repertoire of the couple was not child's play consisting of art songs and opera arias.

On June 10, Ethel's birth anniversary, high baritone Cruz and soprano Arellano joined other professional talents and trained aficionados in a recital at Meralco Main Office, Ortigas, which was transformed into a evening recital. Among those who performed were pianist Salonga, 14-year-old soprano Lisa Macheda, tenor Ramon San Agustin (coincidentally, soprano Tata Robredo, and pianist-singer-radio program host Inez Robledo (who later gave a recital at the De Lasalle University-Manila).

Jin Michael Tippett's "A Child of Our Time" (1944), dedicated to victims of the Holocaust, is unfamiliar to most Filipinos. Thus, I haven't heard of it myself. But that doesn't mean it's not an interesting musical experience.

It was interpreted by the Philippine Philharmonic Orchestra (PPO) led by Eugene Cabilin, soloists (Gonzalez, Dampier, Hernando and Acosteo) and the Kindergarten of st. St. Cecilia's Hall. Another innovative composition was Nicanor Abelardo's "Poem and Images," which contained the memories of a mother's lulla, by with the sinister tones of fascist martial music.

Also remembered in a special concert at the CCP were the victims of the Terezin concentration camp in the Czech Republic. The compositions played by the PPO were by Czech composers who died in Terezin during the Holocaust. While tragic, filtered through the works, these were surprisingly lively, even elevating at times. Guest pianist was the bicentric Swazi-born of Israel.

In "Exodus" (at 12.3% Tangling, Aurelio Valenzuela), duo-concert pianists Della Gamboa Bessa and Amanda Gregorio de Guzman negotiated tricky segment and assurance unfaltered through the years, each enabling both they as well as lyrical passages, each complementing the others.

The encore number "Suite in Modernique" by Cuban National Artist Ernani Cuevas, showed how beautiful our music can be when interpreted in a classical style.

At Greenbelt Chapel, Sinyorita Filipinas' adaptation of Joy Gracey's "Whom Wife Is It Anyway?" (directed by Baby Barredo) was a qualified success, although more Tagalog dialogue should have been thrown in. Contrary to their image, most Bay actors are fluent in Filipino.

Nicolo Manahan and Marine Bolisay were great for as The Mayor and The Maid, respectively. Pinoy accents and all, but Joy Viray, as the congressman's wife, still sounded like the innocent sweetheart she is.

Promising third quarter

The third quarter promises to be just as exciting, as the major companies resume their concert and theater seasons: Ballet Manila (in Aug. 13 with "Raven Lake"), the PPO (on Sept. 9 with tenor Nicholas Ganapo), Tanghalang Pilipino (in August with a "plays" adaptation of Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet"), and Repertory Philippines (opening on Sept. 2 with a Shakespeare comedy, followed by two big musicals).

There's the Filipino Artists Series at the CCP (on July-November by Orchestra artist Santa Ana, tenor Abdul Gaudes, mandolin player Jesus Fernandez and pianist Elroy Annie Espinol. And don't forget the number of all operatic concerts: the Philam Life (July 26), featuring tenor Ornatel Gonzaga of Bulls, one of the leading opera singers in the world today.

ALEXIS Edrada, soprano

NOAH Sioson, Israeli pianist

ROGELIO Pelaseda Jr., tenor

Satya's music transcends barriers

Manila gets an eclectic sample of music by the multicultural group of music scholars from Berklee

Text by Anne A. Jotblom
Photos by Ryan Lim

DRUMMER Jarid Johnson, who has shared the stage with the likes of Chaka Khan and other great artists, believes in the band's vision of constantly engaging in a cultural dialogue to give music a fresh new sound.

SMITTEN incorporates various Filipino classics with a contemporary jazz feel.

IF music governed the world, then it would have long ago found harmony and strength in diversity. The unique musical experiment by Satya, an eclectic mix of scholars from the Berklee College of Music, proved just that. Despite diverse musical backgrounds, language barrier and complicated passport issues, music indeed transcends all boundaries.

"Our diversity has always been a plus. Bringing in people from different backgrounds, race and culture changed the whole vibe of the band," says the half-Filipino, half-Spaniard Marcos J. Suiza, who plays piano and keyboards.

Suiza, who formed the band with brothers Jean Gallardo in 2000 at Boston, says the band originally started with mostly Spanish members. A common core leadership, since engineering graduate at Columbia University, Alexis used to work as a software engineer and designer for a Silicon Valley firm before pursuing music full-time.

Spanish link

When he was awarded the scholarship at Berklee, he didn't know anybody on his music. He only hooked up with Spanish students. Then he met Gallardo. The two began exchanging musical ideas, and ended up composing song after song. When they recorded it, as a promotional project, both realized it sounded good.

"It blends some very separate from there on, so we started school," Suiza says.

As the next several months saw many of its members coming and leaving the band, a new fresh sound began to emerge. This fusing of a mixture of cultures matched their musical outreach brought in his/her interpretation of music [illegible] ethnicity of his/her background.

"We can tell right away that that guy didn't grow up in my neighborhood," he says.

The result is a very digestible and accessible interpretation of jazz, R&B, funk, soul, to flamenco, it sounds like a fusion between pop and jazz. Simply put, the band stripped down jazz music to its bare essentials, so to speak. Because the country turned out you get more than a easy-to-appreciate. No need to have a rigid and laundry to understand jazz music, says Suiza, and you might even want to dance.

"This isn't about making money. If we wanted to make money we would have stayed in our local city and do weddings. (But) go to the Philippines and perform original music," he says.

And it's hard enough that its members live in various parts of the world. After the eight-member band's performance recently at the new 2,300-sq.m. Atelier Center of Music, Philippine Plaza, each has to go his/her separate ways. Gallardo is going back to Spain, Suiza to Bolivia where he still has two years to go before graduation along with a few more student whose members, one is going to England, another to Brazil.

Bridging distance

Suiza, however, thinks that bridging the undesired physical limitations of Satya's members through the Net is the very spirit that drove inspiration from each one of them to pursue their passion. Since some of members have already graduated and are professional musicians in their homelands, they communicate through e-mail and chat, and write songs and compositions from there.

It's not easy, he says, but for now not one is giving up on his/her dreams. The complex arrangement has trained the band to be prepared for anything, even at the last minute. For their Philippine gig, for instance, they have to learn Filipino classics, such as "Dahil Sa Isang Bulaklak," in a span of a few days, and make their own musical interpretation of contemporary Filipino jazz.

Suiza also held music classes at the University of the Philippines. "By bringing the band to different places and meeting people and feeding in on various musical ideas from different countries with different traditions—that's what keeps us fresh," he says.

"The word Satya actually doesn't mean anything, he says. It was just a word they picked up along the way. One of the main goals of the band is to keep no boundaries, Suiza says. Picking a word that doesn't have a national identity keeps the band's spirit free and hopefully brings across a message of tolerance, peace and mutual respect through is sound.

"We try to keep the feeling of being a musician and having every minute of it as much as possible alive and healthy," he says.

Satya is composed of Gallardo and Suiza on piano and keyboards; Miguel Gandelman, tenor and soprano sax; Pauline Hurd, vocals; Ahmet Gurdere, alto sax and flute; Wen Garcia, trumpet; Mark Kelley, bass; and Jared Johnson, drums.

Email the author at ajotblom@inquirer.com.ph

MARCOS Suiza on keyboards plans to bring the band back to the Philippines by December.

LIFESTYLE

"MACHINARY (section)" (2005)

Phases of Lindslee

By Jessica Jalandoni-Bolilles
Contributor

Like Janus, the artist opens a door for a view of his psyche

ANDRÉ Paulin Guillermo Tolentino on the third floor of Cultural Center of the Philippines are hung the latest abstractions of Lindslee.

They are mixed media works offering viewers double treats, for they are a collection of back-and-front pieces the artist has dubbed "Two Phase." And aptly so, for the artworks seem to revolve around concepts and theories that do with appearances and angles.

Janus, two-faced god of gates and doorways in Roman mythology comes to mind, and more this show "presents Lindslee in a different light," it is a fitting reference to the many facets of the artist and his craft.

The works are square, the like from surface displaying the marbled or bloody expanses so familiar in Lee's compositions. Behind, robotic constructions play the S-format to an element and not just a form of support. Where the wood meets on the corners to reflect a circular maze of connected and point, or additional planks which convey perspective, or both.

Circles in squares and the constant by vaguely oriented axes of symmetri-

PHOTOS: C2

"HAZE (Seven Lavender Blades and Watches)"

The weird beauty of found objects

By Constantino C. Tejero

QUILTE is Alfredo Juan Aquilizan's deeply imbued self. Stunning. That's why the semi-additional materials he uses for his mixed media works are often relics from his life, remnants of his past, bits and pieces of his memories.

Used toothbrushes, discarded shoes and slippers, cigarette butts, fine fabrics, baby garments, shredded stocking, sticks and stones are only a few of those found things he collects and finds use for. Bearing them like memorabilia, he integrates them into his artworks of installations that make Aquilizan one of our foremost celebrants of found objects and ready marks.

Such objects he displays again in "Magaling Sarena ni," 40 solo mixed media, until June 28 in Galleria Stamina at the Atrium, L-9, Bldg. A, SM Megamall, Mandaluyong City.

Having made Makiling his home for over 10 years, the artist intensifies his memories of the place and conjures it not only visually but also by using objects retrieved from the place. The association of object and place, the relationship of art and memory, should deepen the knowledge of the artwork for both artist and viewer.

The place, says the exhibition note, furnished Aquilizan not only with ideas and flashes of inspiration and insight but also the very materials for his works.

"Working Clothes Monastery Stone Pillow Sage," for instance, has bougainvillea vines from Mt. Makiling woven into a mat, a nest or the image of a seed opening to the light. This piece won third prize at the 8th Asiatech exhibition of the Philippine national computer center.

These are old works, actually most of them prize winning. "Landscape Painting (Into the Blue)" was an entry in the Philip Morris Art Award competition, while "Landscape Painting (Drowned off)" has been exhibited in the Cultural Center of the Philippines.

The two are similar in their use of empty film containers and plastic cups arranged in the pictorial frame to resemble bodies. They differ only in their embellishment of artist—drip-ping in the former and cobwebby in the latter. Their painted blue and brown, respectively. They evoke the bark of trees, shrubs or the skin of some strange animal.

"Dwelling (A Drift of Empty Selves)" also has bodies as motifs but more tightly and rigidly arranged in a bisected square, then quartered and dripped with karo-tex paint. The eye evokes a structural or architectural detail, a window or grating.

"Diane (Sweet Lavender Shadows and Watches)" looks like purple mist passing through the openings. Only the insides of two are visible in the lowest section of the piece.

"Landscape Painting (Under the Viridian Sky)" is another bisected artwork, the dominant upper section containing branches in parallel arrangement to resemble what I smile of trees, and the lower portion any green artificial leaves piled in four segments.

This lowliest of Aquilizan's resources of the Makiling rainforest were the Dean ng Sining award of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts.

Aquilizan was an assistant professor in the Department of Humanities of the University of the Philippines in Los Baños, Laguna. He was also a special Education teacher at the Philippine High School for the Arts at Mt. Makiling College.

It must have been his long and deep immersion in this "densely wooded, folded and mysterious" mountain that has given this artist the inspiration, the creativity, the potency to transform ordinary things into objects of wonderment.

The whole exhibit could be seen as a tribute to the environment, but it would also be just a reverie.

"LANDSCAPE Painting (Under the Viridian Sky)"

Valenzuela at Big & Small, Alcazaren at West, Acuna at Rustan's

VISUAL ARTS

BIG (LS) Gamboa will finalist his third solo ex-hibit at the Big & Small Art Gallery at 641, Old Magsaysay until July 9. He shows arresting young artist, Valenzuela took up fine arts at University of Santo Tomas.

RUSTAN'S Fourteen rooms up with interna-tional abstract expressionist painter Jean Arp, teacher this exhibit on June 28–July 15 at Rus-tan's Makati. "Beauty in a Heavenly Garden Pavilion" will benefit the Ga-ramas Foundation, artistic and charity programs for women.

ZOBEL Galleries's "Bigger than a Hand Size" will run at the West Gallery in 1868 Magsaysay on July 7–19. An before. Set artist finds ways of giving texture, subtle colors to his abstract art-works, new aesthetic purposes. Call 824-1384.

LE DIEU LE Restaurant will hold "Art after" by Judit Rhoda and Edgar Whang in its room 28 July 28 to The Fest, Fort Bonifacio. Among the representative works to be presented are Reynaldo Vinzons's to Jaime Zobel's Symphony in Blue II" and Whang-od's "Hunas ng Habagat !!! "Call 8813 998.

Old de Leon will hold "assemblage" at Galeria Duemila, Old Magsaysay on July 1–20. The artist takes characters from pop culture, overlapping their imagery and bringing them to a darker realm. 5093220.

FIRST Art Gallery presents "The Country Boy-hood" by Wire Tuazon and Katrina Miranda until July 8 in Antonio's, 45 Old Magsaysay Bldg. A. Tuazon plays off both against appropriated icons. Miranda's paintings are a continuation of

"HOMAGE to Jaime Zobel's Symphony in Blue" II, by Joel de Mesa

for "Underwater" series. Call 8924741 to 8924911.

"WHISPERING Winds, Buyog ng Habagat" VI, by Edwin Witeaga

"STONE Light," a whole exhibition by photographer and Zen Buddhist monk Roloff Beny will be held in the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Bulwagang Juan Luna on July 1–14. The solo show will feature Beny's black and white photographs taken from the late '70s up to his death in 2003. Call 8321125.

MALA Museum features Federico Aguilar Alcuaz's "Postmodern Eyes" on July 8–Oct. 2 at the Museum's ground floor gallery, corner of Makati Avenue and De La Rosa Streets, Makati. Alcuaz is known for his large canvas of artworks that incorporate portraits, abstract paintings, landscapes and tapestries. Call 8921117 to 21.

Baluyut walks on 'Fields of Gold'

KARINA Baluyut opens her solo exhibit tomorrow at 7 p.m. at Galerie Joaquin Mate.

The show will feature 30 works in various sizes and media, including acrylic on canvas and on paper and mixed media.

The "Fields of Gold" series is inspired by the harvest and the golden glow of ripening.

Other works in the show are her harvest-inspired series, works in homage to Petal Blue, her unique series, urban series and Cambodian temple-series.

An architecture graduate of University of the Philippines, Baluyut took some courses in painting and sculpture at the UP College of Fine Arts, although a licensed architect, she has decided to dedicate her life to painting.

Her major influences have been the German abstractionist Paul Klee, architectural concepts, nature and her travels to Asian complex.

Galerie Joaquin Mate is at 2-L, 271 E. Quezon St., and Montessori Lane, San Juan. Call 7229233 or 7229431. Visit www.galeriejoaquin.com or E-mail galerie.joaquin@yahoo.com.

KARINA Baluyut

Phases of Lindslee

"IMAGINARY Junction" (front)

"DIFFERENT Light" (front)

"SIGNIFICANT Figure" (back)

(...)da Vinci's Mysterious Man with its circular border, and numerous optical illusion's efforts at "providing the viewer an insight into the mind of its creator," could it then be said that this body of works bares his thoughts, his details, by presenting an anatomical study in abstraction?

But, really, the approach seems more a take off from Piet Mondrian's lines, planelets, with sharp triangulars instead of rectangulars and colors that are not confined to the primaries, which the Dutch painter used with black lines and mostly white backdrops.

With this exhibit, the artist marks an "experimentation with color and technique." Here, abstract can actually refer to valid perception in psychological terms, wherein a realm circle, which is not much different from an artist's color wheel, not only also simplifies color manner but also becomes the basis for determining which colors correspond to different wavelengths in visual images of sensitivity.

The center of the color circle a white, as is the central element of what seems like planets on the back of "Different Light," with interior for a background.

In "Significant Figure" a yet another circle, the time flat and brown, placed on top of the textured tissue against a bright shade of pink.

Revelation

The use of pink and mauve, tones that are similar to those used for flesh and muscle in cross section illustrations of the human body, may again be a metaphor of revelations...as if to show how Lindslee is "made."

If these meditative paintings portray the inner artist, the circles symbolize the core of his being and the lenses equally what keeps him together. They are perhaps the eternal equivalent of his mandala cloud. "But what are my body causes for. It is the fuel in my vessel that makes me move."

"Imaginary Junction" is the only piece where the central ellipse is absent, replaced by another square. The presentation of proportions poses the usual questions: Is one covering as on the core? Or, precisely yet complementary to, is there a broadening of perspective there?

This is also a common component in psychological tests called ambiguous perspective. It is also in this piece where colors personify Lindslee quite accurately.

The turquoise blue, yellow and yellow-green, as combinations, have the following possible interpretations by tests psychologist Max Luscher, author of the popular Luscher color test.

"Yellow/blue:... open to new ideas and possibilities which he hopes will promote fruitful and interesting.

"Yellow/green: short and family oriented. Is seeking fresh avenues offering greater freedom and the chance to make the most of them..."

Interesting, too, that it is the focus of "imaginary junction," which includes a loose circle, on top of which is another, like removing, which perhaps alludes to how individuals appear intact, whole. That initiates the point, is used to show the screen may imply the invisible bar-

"SIGNIFICANT Figure" (front)

"DIFFERENT Light" (back)

rier which needs to be removed or opened to gain access inward, to the other, maybe more vulnerable, person.

The front compositions show can be called the "Outer," portraying the external, that which is already known about the artist. The forbidding grays, somber earth tones and stark whites are evasive for Lin, as was seen in his unusual realism series which spoke of his outward thoughts, observations of events and goings-on. These represent him as part of the environment, the simple external—Lindslee in face value, so to speak.

"Face/Phase" is, in essence, Lindslee somehow allowing his audience a peek into his psyche, entry into his introspective exploration. It is also a depiction of the existence of the alter ego and the interaction of opening the gates or doors that allow its revelation.

"Face/Phase" is on view until July 31. E-mail author at jojet2002@yahoo.com.

Pinoy artistic triumvirate makes waves in Europe

By Cleo Dermudez
Contributor

SPRING proved a most auspicious time for a group of Filipino mixed artists in Europe. While the temperature here May was rising to record breaking levels all were one evening in embalmed cold and balmy in many places in Europe.

It was their first jaunt in Germany, France, Netherlands and Belgium. The entourage included senior artist, Rafael Cauilan, painter and sculptress and master watercolorist who had previously exhibited in Spain and Portugal; key executives of the Philippine Airlines (PAL) president Fidel Zamora; Saturday Group president Salvador "Buddy" Valenzuela and their Philippine contributors, Bill Press.

The Schengen cabinet organizers in Virgilio Calcon, a resident of Germany for 36 years now who has been promoting the name of Filipino art and artists here in Europe. Calcon was the recipient of the Bintang Award from President Macapagal in 2003 last December for his exemplary record in empowering the plight of the OFW.

First stop was Berlin, in Germany, where the group was prominently featured from exhibits in the Intercontinental Hotel. It was the first time an Asian group was being exhibited at the hotel, the choice venue of the 50th year celebrations of Filipino-German Friendship.

Events included a concert by La Salle Choir, a trade fair of Filipino products and a food festival, with the InterCon Hotel in Manila as the guest chef. Special guest was Ambassador Minerva Falcon.

So enthralled were the guests that they decided to purchase many of the works on opening night.

With his endearing works in aquarelle, done in his usual all-expressive mode, Cauilan proved a favorite.

Close behind him was Fidel Zamora, whose fine delineations of elegant ancestral homes captivated the audience, including a number of European collectors.

The works of Rudy Calcon, enigmatic and cryptic in their configuration of Lemuria and other such sites, were no less enthralling.

Next stop

Next stop was Bruges, the old-est city in Belgium, which has been faithfully preserved to this day. Ana Maria Gonzalez, our diplomatic promoter in Belgium, was guest of honor. The venue was Stadhuis Wandelzaal, the equivalent of the Belgian Trade Center.

Once again, the Filipino community lent their support to the artists, buying their works and ordering specially commissioned works.

The artists were particularly impressed by the colors of the landscape, the breathtaking blue-ness of the sky, and the long and extended daylight that allows them as much hours to work as they want.

Touring The Netherlands and Germany by car (driven by Calcon), who knows every twist and turn of the countryside, the group had open time to explore Paris, where they paid tribute to Jean Auguste Dominique Ingres at a cemetery visit.

They headed for Nice next, stopping by Montmartre, the artists' haven, meeting up with another visiting artist, Fil Delacruz, who was all by himself and was also dazed to be a shown a treasure and haven.

It was to the City of Lights that the artists had the time of their lives, viewing landmarks, checking out shows in galleries and museums, and doing direction to places where artists converged and work.

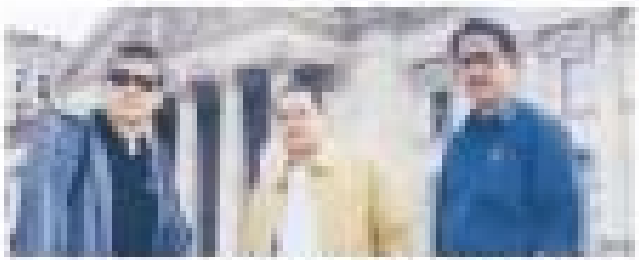
It was also trip that proved most stimulating to the artists, who desperately needed new sources of inspiration for the next phase of their artistic life.

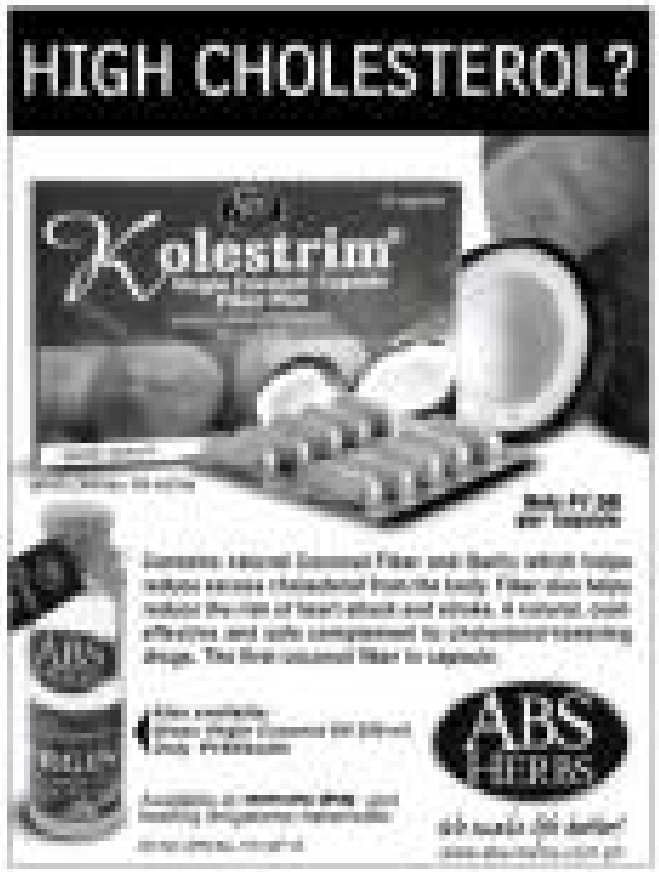
With the marvelous sights of European cities, from Berlin to Belgium, from Amsterdam to Paris, they have seen firsthand the seeds of culture, the structure of civilization, the birthplace of Western art.

This is lovely package for someone as we speak there are artists. It at works, curiously bearing the imprint of a journey that, despite the distance, has managed to bring them consciously closer to their art.

E-mail the author at [illegible]

ARTBALLADOR Rhianna Falcon (center) with Virgilio Calcon, Boris Cavanna, Rafael Cauilan and Fidel Zamora during the exhibit opening at the InterCon Hotel in Berlin



CLOCKWISE, Cavanna and Zamora in front of an exhibit in Berlin, Germany

CLOCKWISE from the violin with the conductor at the panel Philharmonic Orchestra in Berlin